

# **32 IMMORTAL SOLDIERS**

# **IMMORTAL SOLDIERS**

**© Prasad Polwatte**

**ISBN 978-955-677-511-2**

1st Edition March 2021

**Cover Designed By**

Prem Dissanayake

Printed By

Fastprintery (Pvt) Ltd.

No. 165, Devanampiyatissa Mawatha,  
Colombo 10.

# **32 IMMORTAL SOLDIERS**

**Prasad Polwatte**

Published by

**Fast Publishing (Private) Limited**

165, Devanampiyatissa Mawatha, Colombo 10.  
Telephone : 2682223 / 5833323 Fax : 2682224

Distributed by

**Surasa Bookshop**

617, Maradana Road, Colombo 10.  
Telephone : 2694230 Fax : 2674018

*The contents of this book are mainly based on the information provided by newspaper writeups, Internet and books referred to in Section-5 (comprised of additional information annexures and references). The historical background and sociopolitical analysis are based purely on the Author's real life experiences and his own perceptions on Sri Lankan Society the Author takes full responsibility for the contents of this book.*

*All Royalties from this book will be donated to the Ranaviru Seva Authority of Sri Lanka.*

*This book is dedicated to  
28,000 soldiers of the  
Armed Forces of Sri Lanka  
whom have sacrificed their lives and  
19,000 Soldiers who became permanently  
disabled during Sri Lanka's unforgettable  
three-decade long civil war.*

## Prasad Polwatte's newspaper write-ups/Reserch papers/Books

### Newspaper write-ups

- Ananda Icons (03/July/2009) – A Tabloid to Ceylon Daily News
- An Interview with Auditor General (10/November/2009) – Ceylon Daily News
- An Interview with the Commissioner General of Inland Revenue (30 September/2009) – Ceylon Daily News
- Computer: A Tool or a status symbol? (6/November/2009) – Ceylon Daily News
- Who is responsible for corruption? (15/December/2009) – Ceylon Daily News
- Corruption, white color crimes and blue color crimes! (20/October/2010) – Ceylon Daily News
- Japanese Business Philosophy! (13/December/2009) – Ceylon Daily News
- Japanese Production Techniques! (6/June/2012) – Ceylon Daily News
- IFRS Compliance in Sri Lanka (12/July/2011) – Ceylon Daily News
- Bambara Walalla – A movie review (2/September/2010) – Ceylon Daily News
- Gamini – A movie review (4/September/2011) – the Lakbima News
- Punthila – A drama review (8/January/2012) – the Lakbima News
- A review on Sinhalese commercial television dramas – the Lakbima News
- A different perspective on the middle class – Sunday Observer (8/November/2009)
- The evolution of Sri Lankan middle class (2/August/2009) – Sunday Observer
- Banking sector first quarter performance (14/June/2010) – Ceylon Daily News
- The review of first 6 months in 2020 performance of Licensed Commercial Banks (10/September/2010) – Ceylon Daily News
- The 2010 performance review of Licensed Commercial Banks (12/April/2011) – Ceylon Daily News
- The review of first 6 months in 2011 performance review of Licensed Commercial Banks (13/October/2011) – Ceylon Daily News
- How Forces gained victory and peace was achieved: A Timeline (19/May/2020) – Ceylon Daily News
- The need for Accountability, skills development and environmental safeguards from SL constitution (8/Dec/2020) – Ceylon Daily News

### Research Papers

- A survey of professional accountants', academics', and undergraduates' attitudes towards tertiary accounting education – A postgraduate research report, Monash University, (1993)
- ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ මූල්‍ය ආයතනවල ආයෝජනය සඳහා තැන්පත්කරුවන් දරන ආකල්ප පිළිබඳ ව සමීක්ෂණය (2010)

### Books/ Biographies

- Babun Appu Dynasty (2014)
- 29 Immortal Soldiers (2016)
- අමරණිය සොල්දාදුවන් විසිනවය (2016)
- අමරණිය සොල්දාදුවන් තිස්දෙදෙනා (2021)



## **About the author**

Mr Prasad Polwatte, a distinguished product of Ananda College, Colombo, is an Accounting and Banking Professional with over 25 years of broadbased experience in Banking, Finance, and related Industry. A Fellow of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants – UK, Prasad is also an Associate of the Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka and the Institute of Data Processing Management – UK. In addition, he holds a Master of Business from University of Monash – Australia and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Colombo.

In his illustrious career, he has held Senior Managerial positions in some of the leading state and non-state corporates of Sri Lanka, including, Sampath Bank PLC, Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd, Tokyo Cement Colombo Terminal (Pvt) Ltd, Singhagiri Group PLC, Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and Nation Lanka PLC.

I wish to commend Prasad on his latest venture that of analyzing the root causes of the 30-year-old civil war and penning tributes to few of the many gallant servicemen, representing diverse communities of our country, who laid down their lives to restore peace to this land.

**Mr. U H Palihakkara,**

Former Council President of the Institute of  
Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka.

*Scientific study of the biological evolution of human social behavior leaves no doubt that our species, homo sapiens, evolved through conflicts between tribes. Tribalism was a fundamental human trait. Human history mostly reflects the history of tribal conflicts.*

*(The social conquest of earth- Edward O Wilson)*

*Ethnic contentions are death-traps affecting the entire human race. Terrorism now days, is prevailing in almost all Societies immaterial of the phase of their physical and economic development. The history of the perennial problem of discrimination faced by the blacks in North America is as lengthy as the history of that country. The conflict between the Jews and Nazis in Germany and the skirmish between Shias and Sunnis in the Muslim world have escalated to such heights, ending up in major wars in the world. The conflict between Isreal and Palestine is as lengthy as the history of the Israel.*

*(32 Immortal Soldiers, P.37)*



# **Message from the Honourable Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**



Inimical meddling in internal affairs of a country by foreign sources that are hostile, internal ethnic discord and terrorist threats from radicals and fanatics are the prime challenges faced by any sovereign nation. These inter woven perils always carry a long antiquity. Ethnic strife in a country could evolve into a terrorist contention. If a powerful regional state desires of weakening a country in the neighbourhood, it could support and sustain the terrorists in that country by way of supplying them with necessary funding and arms and providing them with the required up-skilling and training.

The history of our motherland is full of such meddling by influential foreign invaders. Heroic Sinhalese of this nation have fought with Indian intruders as well as western invaders even at the cost of their own lives. The British imperialists who implemented their “divide and rule” strategy during the 135 years they dominated this country, managed in creating inimical and eternal divisions among the natives. They were responsible in bringing down a labour force of about 235,000 to this country from India. They established missionary schools in areas like Jaffna where Tamils were dominant and proliferated English education in that part of the country. They created more employment opportunities in the government sector to the Tamils who had their education in the English language.

The leaders who seized the political power after securing independence, preferred to trail behind the controversial policies designed by the British imperialists only to gain political advantages for themselves. The vicious trend in Tamil separatism speeded up progressively to become a fully-fledged civil warfare which dragged on for nearly thirty years. Most of our political leaders who were in governance were under the false-belief that the Tamil terrorists were so powerful and as invincible in their might. They were even prepared to unilaterally grant them the right to self-rule over the areas in the North and the East. Such mentalities and false-beliefs were supported by the international community. The ultimate result was the initiation of so-called peace talks that abetted in dragging the conflict over a period of thirty years. The cost of such fallacies was so enormous that we lost the lives of over 28,000 soldiers in liberating the motherland in 2009. In addition, the country was left with over 18,000 disable soldiers. Be that as it may, the most unfortunate thing is that a majority of our people have forgotten, within very short period of time, the brutality of the circumstances under which we lived in those days and the greatness of such a conquest. Moreover, it appears that such people seem to be indifferent to the probable consequences the country would encounter if that crucial opening had been left to pass with indecision or inaction.

Prasad Polwatte by his book titled “Immortal Soldiers” has done an in-depth analysis of the socio-political environment that nourished a vicious brand of terrorism which would have led to the ultimate target of dividing the country on ethnic delineations. He vividly exhibits the heroism and the brilliance of the soldiers who steered the war machinery accomplishing a magnificent ending.

The study of the history of a country and literature on any strife are subjects that should be dealt with utmost care and discipline. Most of the time, these subjects are distorted and mis-interpreted by opportunistic political forces that are predisposed by ulterior motive of jeopardising the sovereignty and the integrity of a country. Such forces are always inclined to

defame the heroic soldiers who did their utmost to free a country from destructions even at the cost of their lives, by framing unfounded allegations against them. Unfortunately, a few of the disgruntled so-called artists in the country make use even a very rare instances of failing of a soldier for the sole purpose of painting a bad image of the heroic armed forces. It is my earnest view that Prasad's effort herein, is a clever accomplishment in delivering a timely analysis of a contemporary theme.

**MAHINDA RAJAPAKSE**

Honourable Prime Minister of the  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



## **Message from the Honourable Secretary of Defence**



Old Anandian, Prasad Polwatte's 2006 publication "Immortal Soldiers" is the outcome of an all-embracing research done on the un-parallel and one-of-a-kind acts of bravery and supreme sacrifices made by the soldiers during the three decade long separatist war.

Before this publication, he pioneered in editing a special supplement to be issued along with the Daily News on "ANANDA ICONS". This publication helped the readers to a great measure in educating themselves on the contribution made by the protagonists produced by the Ananda College in winning over the separatist menace. The analytical specifics given in this publication perfectly magnifies the contribution made by the first tier lead heroes, the then Secretary of Défense and now the Commander in Chief, His Excellency the President Ghotabaya Rajapakse , the then Commander of the Army, General Sarath Fonseka, the then Vice Admiral, Vasantha Karannagoda, the then Civil Défense Forces Director, Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara as well as the then second tier leaders, myself, Major General Jagath Dias, Brigadier Prasanna Silva and the Brigadier Chergi Gallage.

While reading Immortal Soldiers, written by Prasad, I myself as a soldier who actively contributed to win this war, felt the heaviness in my heart, vividly perplexing the experiences that we encountered whilst executing the operations that dragged for

nearly three decades. The lucid style of writing used is definitely serving handy, not only a person like my-self who is well versed with the art of war, but the general public with no hands-on experience on the subject.

The new edition of the book “Immortal soldiers” is done to reminisce the incredible services the awardees of Parama Weera Vibhushanaya have rendered to the nation in conquering the enemy. It is a solemn moment that I address their family members and dependents who are still shocked and ever since, in tears.

Prasad, in magnanimity, has not only offered the entirety of the royalty received on the book as its author to the wellbeing of the recipients of welfare work done by the Ranawiruseva Authority but also offered to make substantial financial contributions to the needy dependents of the awardees.

Subsequent to the date of the first print, the award had been made to three more recipients and this print would enable in making a complete record of all awardees.

At the same time, I take great pleasure in cherishing this endeavour made by Prasad Polwatte, a non-military academic, without expecting any pecuniary rewards in return, especially in times where some disgruntled elements are trying their very best to tarnish the names of these heroic patriots who sacrificed their precious lives purely for the safety of the territorial integrity of the country.

**General (Retired) Kamal Gunaratna**

Honourable Secretary of Defence

## **Message from the Honourable Chief of Defence Staff & the Commander of the Army**



“A soldier is motivated by the conviction that the motherland is benefited by his dedication to its upliftment, the noblest duty he renders to his country than the trivial compensation he receives personally, in return. That is the secret behind the bravery with which he is prepared to sacrifice his life for the motherland. They are prepared to readily dedicate their lives as selfless, brave patriots”

I appreciate and admire very much the pains endured by the author in cherishing the dedication of the valiant soldiers who rescued the nation from the thirty year-long menace of terrorism. Each nation, depending on its culture and the social environment has developed its own way of appreciating nationalism and patriotism. The book “Immortal soldiers” authored by Prasad Polwatte would be of immense inspiration in inculcating the spirit of patriotism and nationalism in the generations to come.

Only a person with precise in-depth ground knowledge of the theatre of war could do justice to the historical legends. One has to be precise with facts in dealing with persons who fought shoulder to shoulder with us and sacrificed their precious lives for the benefit of the nation. I confess that while reading these true stories, it took my mind back to the rugged days when we had to traverse hostile terrains. The message, the author is trying to deliver home is that the freedom that we gained was not given to us on a platter, but one that we earned with the blood of the heroic sons of the soil.

The facts had been arranged in a very orderly manner giving uppermost respect to the soldier who discharged his duty by the country undeterred, with diligence. It was bravery and heroism to the last letter and a supreme sacrifice, second to none. The core theme of Prasad's entire effort had been to depict the true history of terrorism in the country in the most lucid form and to emphasise the magnitude of the un-told cruelty and suffering under-went by the general public of this country under the vindictive dictates of terror. It also highlights the price paid by the common people in the form of unceasing struggles. It is definitely a powerful message to the disgruntled elements world over, that they should refrain from attempting to be-little the dawn of peace in the country. It is time that they make-up their mind to encourage the post-conflict generations to enjoy life and live in amity.

The proceedings in the book had been excellently lined-up for the readers to comprehend the heroic acts of brave soldiers who performed undeterred in the face of impending dangers to their own lives. It also helps in fathoming and appreciating the untold sufferings experienced by them in the theatre of war. The author accomplishes his aim by offering fitting honours to the courageous, shining stars who sacrificed their lives to safeguard the territorial integrity of our beloved motherland.

Remarkably well-planned volume "IMMORTAL SOLDIERS" is a unique piece of art in every respect. The book, as an analytical record of the vision that guided the country in achieving the impossible. The leadership and the forces that led to peace after a period of unprecedented sacrifices over three decades are amply exhibited and the book is of great historical value. The artistic presentation makes those noble soldiers truly IMMORTAL I congratulate the author over the efficacious challenge he endured and wish him all success in his future journalistic endeavours.

**General Shavendra Silva**

WWV RWP RSP VSV USP NDC PSC

General

Chief of Defence Staff & the Commander of the Army



## **Message from the Honourable Chairman Ranawiru Seva Authority of Sri Lanka**



An old Anandian Prasad Polwatte is a close friend of mine. Prasad is a well-read author who has specialised in war-literature. He has done intensive research on the thirty-year war that engulfed this land.

Prasad is endeavouring to depict a soldier's dedication to his motherland and heroism with which they defended the sovereignty of the country even at the cost of their lives. It is unfortunate that some of our writers not only advocate the futility of war but make use of only the inadvertent incidents faced by some of the soldiers purely to find fault in them and to defame them. They try to create an impression that a village youngster is keener in finding only a remedy to his lively-hood glitches through employment in the forces than genuinely serving the nation by being engaged in the effort to rid the country of the menace of terrorism. The book IMMORTAL SOLDIERS authored by Prasad is a commendable research done on the heroes who volunteered even to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country for which they were honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

Most often, my-self, as a soldier who contributed to this sacred mission in freeing the country from the clutches of the terrorists get reminded of the grave dangers we encountered in the midst of the operations. Prasad's book vibrantly relights those atrocious experiences.

I was invited to the function held in 2016 to ceremonially publish the book “immortal Soldiers” The invitations to the function were also extended to the families of the awardees of Parama Weera Wibhushanaya and they all were offered handsome financial rewards by Prasad. Besides, he donated the entirety of the royalty benefits received on the book for the benevolence of the Ranaviru Seva Authority, another gracious act.

Prasad’s aim now is to include the details pertaining to the self-less acts of bravery of the three new awardees of Parama Weera Vibhushanaya and to re-print the book as a new edition “Immortal Soldiers”

In an era where some disgruntled elements are trying to eradicate the memory of these self-less heroes who sacrificed their precious lives for the sake of preserving of the unity, integrity and sovereignty of our motherland, I momentarily appreciate the efforts made by Prasad, especially he being a person not directly connected to the war effort.

**Major General (Retired) Nandana Senadheera**

WWV RWP RSP VSV USP mdu

Chairman

Ranaviru Seva Authority

## FOREWORD

It is very gratifying to find a writer as sensitive as Prasad Polwatte who has ventured out on a timely mission of expressing some of the hardest emotions to be articulated. He does not wax eloquent on the glories of war nor mourn the grim horrors of war. He dwells on the realities conceptualizing the possible emotions of those who willingly faced death or mutilation so that you and I may live. His mission seems to be a one meant to edify those that are insensitive to the travails of those who protected them from death or torture. He records graphically and meaningfully the noble emotions that drove the dedicated and the committed to sustain the life of others by sacrificing their own. Having seen for 39 of the best years of my life some of the horrors of war, much of it right in the battlefield - having seen the calm march towards death or mutilation if only it were to give life and security to others, I am doubly gratified that

someone who has not shared these painful memories on the battlefield can share them with such empathy,

by the use of the written word. Prasad's stories are not personal historical records of heroes or records of

events, but a distinctive demonstration of how mainly our simple folks, the sons of the soil, turned themselves into heroes by giving their all for the love of their motherland.

They did not live to see the medals heaped on them, or hear the praises sung, or the insults hurled upon them. This brings to mind the immortal words of Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae MD, a surgeon in the Canadian Army (1872-1918) immortalized by 'the most memorable of war poems' ever written, which made the red poppy in Flanders Fields a symbol of commemoration:

We are the Dead. Short days ago

We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,

Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders Fields

The medals are not mere pieces of metal but are vitalized by powerful emotions of gratitude, appreciation, acknowledgement and love beyond measure for those that gave us a new lease of life. But that is only poor consolation for the living – that too only for those who are sensitive. The death of a dedicated soldier, sailor, airman or other hero creates energy for the nation to move forward towards its goals. It appears that in death they perform that role more effectively. But not for long! The tragedy is that memories are short. Today, many are those who have forgotten the ravages of terrorism, of war, the fear of death that lurked around every corner, the carnage, the mayhem. As stated at the outset, this book by Prasad is timely. It should be a reminder to those with such short memories how much we owe to the dedicated men who went beyond reach. It brings to mind the words of the bard “ingratitude, thou marblehearted fiend ... ..”

When the guns are silent the nation breathes that blissful sense of life, thanks to the sacrifices made by our heroes; we breathe in silence the last breath that they left forever in our midst.

Prasad’s analytical mind has suggestively thrown up useful guidelines for the use of the future planners of the peace process. In the absence of a path to peace the committed, the dedicated took the great march forward in an uncharted terrain. The path to peace may be preparedness just as much as eternal vigilance is the price of democracy.

Prasad has codified facts related to the war for the edification of the born and the unborn in the true spirit of our national tradition of composing compendia or Kosha Grantha, containing the truth and nothing but the truth. The readership stands to nothing but gain and edification.

**Rear Admiral Dr. Sarath P Weerasekera**

VSV RWP USP Psc (USA) Ndc (India) DISS(Hawaii)

Member of Parliament

16th June 2015

## Parama Weera Vibhushanaya



Established in 1981, the ‘Parama Weera Vibhushanaya’ (PWV) is the highest and most respected award for bravery to honour selected individuals of all ranks in the Army, Navy and Air Force of Sri Lanka. It is awarded to recognize individual acts of gallantry and conspicuous bravery of the most exceptional order in the face of the enemy, performed voluntarily whilst in active service and with no regard to the risks to one’s own life and security, with the objective of safeguarding thereby, the lives of one’s comrades or facilitating the operational aim of one’s Unit/Regiment.

The Parama Weera Vibhushanaya is presented upon the recommendation of the Commander of the Army, Navy or Air Force. The Gazette Extraordinary No 156/5 of 01/09/1981 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka states the terms and conditions which mandate the presenting of this award.

*Once, a little boy approached a World War II veteran at a victory parade and asked him a question: “How does it feel to be a war hero?” The veteran simply smiled and said: “I am just a survivor, son. We buried all the heroes.”*

*War is harsh. War is brutal. War is painful. Even amidst the brutality of war, humanity shines through in the form of heroic soldiers who would not hesitate for a moment to give up their own lives so that the lives of others could be saved and protected. That determination is what makes a hero. A hero does not think about himself. A hero is selfless and courageous beyond belief.*

*During the three decades of war in Sri Lanka, many heroes emerged from the battlefields of the North and the East. These are men thanks to whose bravery we can breathe freely today.*

*(29 Immortal Soldiers, P. 169)*



O/3113  
Captain  
S U Aladeniya



S/34553  
Corporal  
Y G G Kularathne



O/63672  
Lieutenant  
K W T Nissanka



S/77304  
Staff Sergeant  
H P B Gunasekara



S/15296  
Lance Corporal  
W I M Senevirathne



O/50981  
Colonel  
A F Lafr



O/61726  
Major  
G S Jayanath



O/64314  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Jayasinghe



O/64734  
Major  
K A Gamage



O/65746  
Captain  
U G A S Samaranyake



O/66514  
Captain  
H G M K I Megawarna



S/511904  
Sergeant  
H G Bandara



S/618841  
Sergeant  
P N Suranga



S/410063  
Corporal  
P M N Pushpakumara



S/462696  
Sergeant  
D M S C Bandara



S/467722  
Corporal  
K Chandana



S/197405  
Lance Corporal  
R M D M Ratnayake



S/317077  
Corporal  
A M M P Abeysinghe



S/198802  
Lance Corporal  
A M B H G A Banda



S/319509  
Lance Corporal  
T G R Dayananda



O/66009  
Captain  
P N Punsiri



O/416581  
Lieutenant  
W D Jayathilake



S/552009  
Sergeant  
K G N L R Perera



S/552511  
Sergeant  
K P D T Gunasekara



S/553286  
Corporal  
H A N Kumara



S/554072  
Corporal  
S V A M Pushpamal



O/64556  
Major  
W H I S B Walisundara



S/362939  
Sergeant  
A M Anura



S/371780  
Lance Corporal  
K G M Rajapakse



NRX 0517  
Lieutenant  
J L D S Wijetunga



XX 31243  
Chief Petty Officer  
K G Shantha



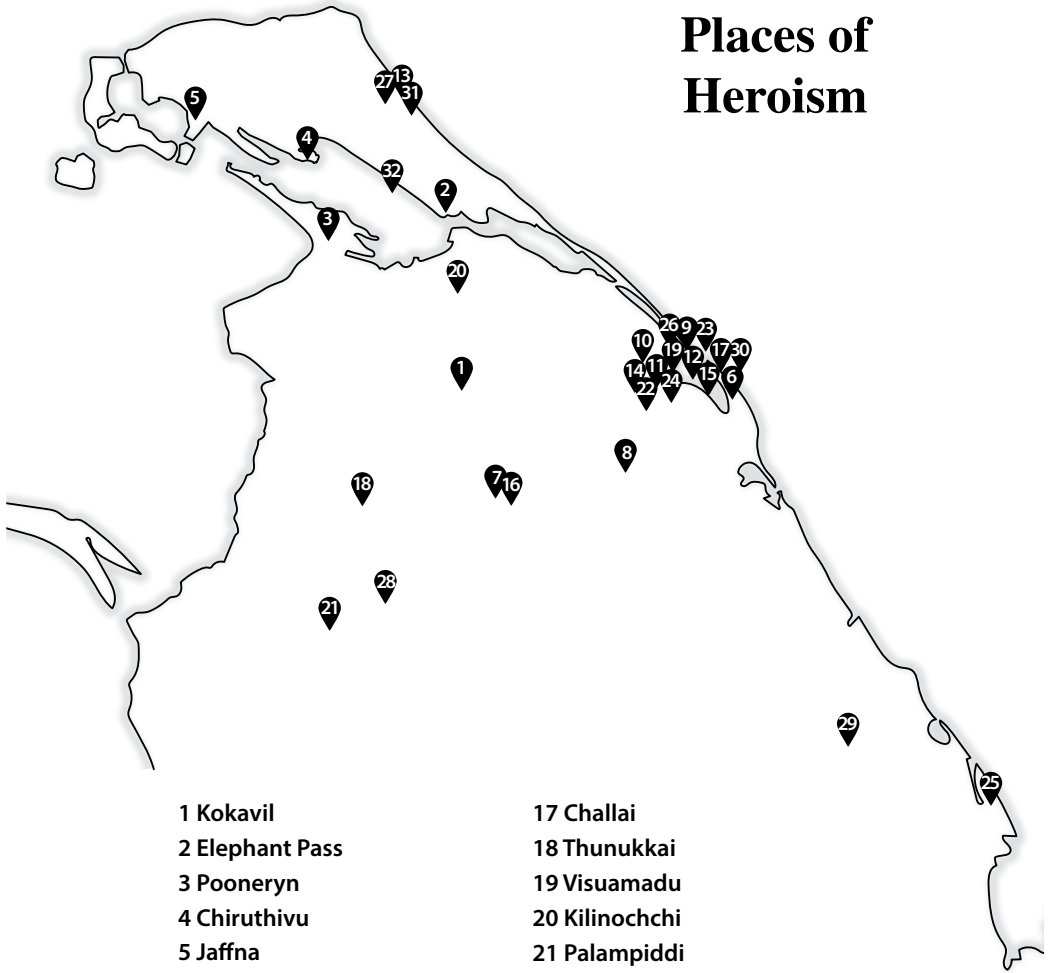
01502  
Wing Commander  
T D S Silvapulle

## Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Medalists





## Places of Heroism



- 1 Kokavil
- 2 Elephant Pass
- 3 Pooneryn
- 4 Chiruthivu
- 5 Jaffna
- 6 Mullaitivu
- 7 Mankulam
- 8 Oddusuddan
- 9 Ampalavanpokkanai
- 10 Pudukuduiruppu
- 11 Pudukuduiruppu
- 12 Nandikadal
- 13 Muhamalai – Nagarkovil
- 14 Vishvamadu
- 15 Pudukuduiruppu
- 16 Mankulam

- 17 Challai
- 18 Thunukkai
- 19 Visuamadu
- 20 Kilinochchi
- 21 Palampiddi
- 22 Iranamadu
- 23 Pudumathalan
- 24 Pudukuduiruppu
- 25 Nilaweli
- 26 Pudumathalan
- 27 Nagarkovil
- 28 Periampane
- 29 Adampan
- 30 Chalai
- 31 Nagarkovil
- 32 Thamilamadam

*History is full of evidence to support the fact that the honesty, and the selfishness in a youngster is very much greater than that of a grown up. It is a common belief of the majority that patriotism and the humbleness of a village lad is much greater than that of a boy grown-up in an urban environment.*

*Nineteen-year-old soldier Rathnayake who sacrificed his life in Chalai as well as Lance Corporal Mahinda who was also in his nine-teens who sacrificed his life in Adampan for the sake of the unity of the motherland are from average families with rural backgrounds. They exhibit nothing but the common denomination of valour bravery and heroism*

(32 Immortal Soldiers- P159)

## Acknowledgements

The Book titled ‘Twenty-nine Immortal Soldiers’ was first published in time for the National Book Exhibition in September 2015. Subsequently, a reprint was done in March 2016 for its Book Launch. The number of Parama Weera Vebhushanaya (PWV) medalists were 29 at the data collection in 2014 and with the subsequent awarding of PWV medals to three other soldiers, the present number of PWV medalists have increased to 32.

The Book ‘Twenty-nine Immortal Soldiers’ gained remarkable appreciation from social media, newspapers and patrons of other media with all around 3000 books sold-out within two years. The requests for a reprint from potential readers and also the necessity to include the new PWV medalists motivated me to compile this revised book on the Immortal Soldiers.

I am grateful to the Honourable Defence Secretary Retired General Kamal Gunaratne and Chairman Ranaviru Seva Authority Retired General Nandana Senadeera for granting the approval and providing me with information and supporting with facts to be included in this Book. I am immensely thankful to the Media Unit of the Ministry of Defence for providing me with data and information promptly.

The support and help given by numerous military officers to comprehend military lingo and operations should not go unmentioned without a word of appreciation.

Rear Admiral Dr. Sarath Weerasekera was generous with his time to go through my book and pen a foreword despite his tight schedule.

I am grateful to Mr Wijayakumara Manchanayaka, Ms Sarojini Munasinghe and Media Office staff of the Honourable Prime Minister whom were instrumental in obtaining a message from His Excellency Mahinda Rajapakse. Also, I am obliged to

Ms Probhodinie Marasinghe in obtaining a message from the Commander of the Sri Lanka Army.

I am grateful to my former superior officer at Sampath Bank PLC Mr K D Piyasena for the English Translation of my Sinhala book and to my sincere friends Mr Prasanna Weerasekara and Mr Dushanth Jayasinghe who immensely helped me in proof reading and reviewing the content of this Book.

My sincere thanks to Captain Elmo Jayawardana for being kind enough to review my humble effort and also for helping me to improve the presentation of the Book.

I am grateful to The Font Master, Printcare Digital Solutions (Pvt) Ltd for page settings and Fast Publishing (Pvt) Limited for accepting my book for publication.

Finally, I am indebted to my beloved wife Harshini for her unwavering love, support and encouragement throughout.

**Prasad Polwatte**

71, Ananda Mawatha, Gampaha.

Tel: 033-2228911, 0773478138

email: polwatteprasad@gmail.com

Web: [www.prasadpolwatte.com](http://www.prasadpolwatte.com)



Courtesy of Wijaya Newspapers picture library



# Table of Contents

<b>Section -1</b>	The Background	35
1.1	Historical backdrop – Golden struggles of Sri Lanka	35
1.2	The origin of terrorism in Sri Lanka and its protraction to a civil war	37
1.3	The ancient Realms of Sinhalese kings and foreign invasions	40
1.4	The Sinhalese Kings who were deceived by foreign invaders	42
1.5	The treacherous aristocrats of up-country	45
1.6	The Colonial Era	47
1.7	First twelve years since independence	51
1.8	Sirima Bandaranayake Era	53
1.9	J R Jayawardhana Era	55
1.10	Ranasinghe Premadasa Era	61
1.11	Chandrika Kumaranathunga Era	63
1.12	Mahinda Rajapakse Era	65
1.13	Relocation of Civilians	67
<b>Section -2</b>	Protracted Eelam War	69
2.1	Eelam War – I	71
2.2	Eelam War – II	73
2.3	Eelam War – III	75
2.4	Eelam War – IV	76

<b>Section – 3</b>	<b>The Acts of Gallantry that Earned the 32 PWVs</b>	<b>79</b>
3.1	Captain S U Aladeniya	80
3.2	Corporal Y G G Kularatne	83
3.3	Lieutenant K W T Nissanka	86
3.4	Staff Sergeant H P B Gunasekara	89
3.5	Lance Corporal W I M Seneviratne	92
3.6	Colonel A F Lafir	95
3.7	Major G S Jayanath	97
3.8	Lieutenant Colonel Jayasinghe	100
3.9	Major K A Gamage	103
3.10	Captain U G A S Samaranayake	106
3.11	Captain H G M K I Megawarna	109
3.12	Sergeant H G S Bandara	111
3.13	Sergeant P N Suranga	114
3.14	Corporal P M N Pushpa Kumara	116
3.15	Sergeant D M S Chandrasiri Bandara	118
3.16	Corporal K Chandana	121
3.17	Lance Corporal R M D M Ratnayake	123
3.18	Corporal A M M P Abeysinghe	125
3.19	Lance Corporal A M B H G Abeyratne Banda	127
3.20	Lance Corporal T G R Dayananda	129
3.21	Captain P N Punsiri	131
3.22	Lieutenant W D Jayathilake	134
3.23	Staff Sergeant K G N L R Perera	137



3.24 Sergeant K P D T Gunasekara	141
3.25 Corporal H A Nilantha Kumara	145
3.26 Corporal S V A M Pushpamal	148
3.27 Major W M S B Walisundara	151
3.28 Sergeant A M Anura	154
3.29 Lance Corporal K G M Rajapakse	157
3.30 Lieutenant J L D S Wijetunge	160
3.31 Chief Petty Officer K G Shantha	163
3.32 Wing Commander T D S Silvapulle	166
 <b>Section – 4 The Overall Analysis and Conclusion</b>	 169
4.1 Overall Analysis	169
4.2 Conclusion	171
 <b>Section-5 Additional Information, Annexes and References</b>	 175
5.1 Tamil Militant Groups	175
5.2 Brutal attacks by the LTTE	180
5.2.1 Political leaders assassinated by the LTTE	181
5.2.2 Civilians and border villages attacked by the LTTE	189
5.2.3 Economic targets attacked by the LTTE	196
5.2.4 Religious places attacked by the LTTE	202
5.2.5 1990 massacre of Sri Lanka Police officers by the LTTE	205
5.3 Abbreviations	204
5.4 Corresponding ranks of Sri Lankas Armed Force	206
5.5 Reference	207



## **Section-1**

### **The Background**

#### **1.1**

### **Historical backdrop - Golden struggles of Sri Lanka**

Why should we chronicle the greatness of our war heroes who glorified this splendid Serendib in the past?

Chronicles take us back to a magnificent Sri Lankan history of more than five millennia. The glorious and glitzy Sri Lankan history is full of brilliant men and women who did great by our life-giving, prized, motherland, preserving its territorial integrity and sovereignty even at the cost of their precious lives. We were blessed with a magnificent and a unique ART OF WAR of our own, incomparable with any other country in the world.

The great warrior chronicles of Dutugemunu era evidenced the glamorous war history we Sri Lankans have inherited and the brilliant achievements of our heroes.

We are fortunate that we were blessed with a superb set of brilliant warriors who shouldered the responsibility of safeguarding the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the island during the thirty-year terrorist menace that engulfed this country in the not too distant past. In their sacred effort, some of them had to sacrifice their lives. The colourful, memorable and valiant life-stories of them are legend. It is our sacred duty that we chronicle them for the sake of our future generations.

The history is full of ethnic strife, resulting in prodigious tragedies to man-kind. Sometimes, these ethnic struggles had

evolved into conflicts of international proportions. With the advent of modern weaponry and high-tech war-fare, the intensity of these conflicts had gone to very deep lengths of some of the economies of under-developed countries, threatening their very own survival.

The Sri Lankan conflict that had a small beginning in the 1970s escalated to international proportions, after the ethnic riots occurred in July 1983. Some of the countries in the international community tolerated these developments and supported the miscreants with military training and funding. They never used their good offices at least, in mitigating the repercussions of such inimical attempts.

The intensity of the mischief created by them could be understood from the dastardly acts of assassinations of the Prime Minister of India, Rajeev Gandhi in 1991 and the President of Sri Lanka, Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993.

Despite being elevated to a stature of internationally famed terror out-fit, the LTTE was proscribed by about 32 sovereign nations. The major countries that proscribed the LTTE as a terror out-fit included India (in 1994) USA (in 1997) Britain (in 2001) and European Union (in 2006).

The attempt made by India in curbing the LTTE terror through the deployment of an 80,000 strong force, (IPKF) in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka over a period of three years from 1987 to 1990 ended up in utter failure.

Sri Lanka grew to be a power to reckoned with, over the victory accomplished in 2009 by annihilating the LTTE. The mediation by international powers in the form of arranging and facilitating of dialogue, resulted in truces and Ceasefire Agreements only to prolong civil strife over a period of nearly thirty years.

The trademark of a fanatic terror organization is the indiscriminate use of massacre of civilians in attracting public

attention. Such barbaric mode of operandi, always differ from the theatrically conventional war-fare conducted by civilized armed forces, governed by International Law. The terror manoeuvring includes the use of suicide bombers, women and child soldiers. More often than not, their cadres included an exceptional set of highly motivated fighters to engage in suicide attacks. Most often, Sri Lankan forces had to encounter enormous challenges in meeting such determined enemy encounters. The valiant soldiers, the subject of this volume, had done very great and proud, in making this one-of-a-kind accomplishment a reality, by the Sri Lankan forces.

## 1.2

### **The origin of terrorism in Sri Lanka and it's protraction to a civil war**

Ethnic contentions are death-traps affecting the entire human race. Terrorism nowadays, is prevailing in almost all societies, immaterial of the phase of their physical and economic development. The history of the perennial problem of discrimination faced by the blacks in North America is as lengthy as the history of that country. The conflict between the Jews and the Nazis in Germany and the skirmish between Shias and Sunnis in the Muslim world have escalated to such heights, ending up in major wars in the world. The conflict between Isreal and Palestine is as lengthy as the history of the Israel. Still no solution has been found for such perennial conflicts, making us to believe as if such jeopardies had been mysticism created.

Most of the time, some of these internal conflicts get escalated to international proportions, mainly due to the actions by some characters with vested interests. Some of the biased media groups that are operating internationally, at times, perversely attempt to misrepresent these obvious terrorist manoeuvres

as freedom struggles and the genuine efforts made by affected governments to restrain such miscreants are being posed by these media groups as instances of human rights violations. At the same time, some powerful countries with vested interests, allow such miscreant groups to venomously mushroom and also to abetting them in creating havoc, expecting indirect benefits from such dastardly acts. In this context, the best living example is the terrorist induced desolations, Sri Lanka experienced in the recent past.

The ethnic conflict that raged between the Sinhalese and the Tamils in Sri Lanka has a long history, running from the era of Kings Dutugamunu and Elara. With the island becoming a colony of the British, the level of depth and the intensity of this skirmish in the island evolved into a conflict of the middle class of the country. Under the strategy 'divide and rule' implemented by the British, the Tamil minority was given a preferred status by providing them with more employment openings in the government sector compared to the Sinhalese who in numbers, were the majority of the country.

Naturally after gaining independence, as a democracy, the governing power of the country changed hands from imperialists to the majority Sinhalese. The decisions with regard to resource allocation of the country became more rational and equitable. The Tamils who were not entirely happy with the rationality and equity coming into play, started agitating for an implementation of an irrational phenomenon called 'equal rights' for both communities. This demand that has no rational validity, finally fashioned into an unbridgeable ethnic conflict. This eventually, developed into a major fault-line between the two ethnicities which led to the climax, agitating for 'self-rule' and finally a gargantuan Tamil terrorist confrontation.

Tamil terrorism had the support of the Tamil diaspora domiciled in the west. They also received the thrust of international training and financing from some of the powerful countries in the world. They were able to source the most modern weapons and the blessings of high-tech electronic war-fare

developed by the west. The support the Tamil terrorists secured from the international non-government organizations and some of the international media giants were very vital in sustaining their insurrection over a lengthy period.

They were able to launch very successful ambushes against the Sri Lankan forces. Sometimes, they were so successful that they managed to completely wipe-out some of the Sri Lankan bases. The massacre of civilians, a frequently used and the most dreaded weapon in their armoury, was the hall-marks of the brutality used by Tamil terrorists attracting the much-needed international attention.

## 1.3.1

## **The ancient Realms of Sinhalese kings and the foreign Invasions**

As could be fathomed from the chronicles of the Island of Ceylon, this country had been under foreign dominations, at various intervals in the history. The aggressors originating from India, as evident from Mahavamsa, had invaded this country on innumerable number of times in the past. The pioneering sea-faring nations originating from Europe, namely; Portuguese and Dutch as well as the British dominated this country for several centuries.

The recorded history of Ceylon dates back to Yakkha clan who inhabited the country from the pre-Cristian millennium. The other dominant clans include Naga and Dewa. Naga clan comprises of Aryans immigrated from Media. Dewa comprises the Persians immigrated to the country via India.

Yakkha inhabited in Lankapura, present day Anuradhapura and the present day Puttalam areas. Naga clan inhabited in present Nainativu and Kelaniya areas. Minority Deva clan inhabited the Southern areas and the up-country called Malaya Rata. Sakya Prince Vijaya and his cohorts had immigrated in about 543 B.C. to Thammenna area in Ceylon from North India. Vijaya, who got friendly with Kuweni, a Yakkha clan woman and managed to secure the control of the country. Later he got married to a princess brought down from India. Vijaya and his cohorts inhabited the Western costal area adjacent to Malwathu Oya.

After Vijaya, his nephew, prince Panduwasadewa who migrated from India made his Capital City in Upatissa Village and ruled the country. Prince Badrakachchaya who migrated from India became his queen. Her brothers, Rohana, Rama, Uruwela, Anuradha, Vijitha and Dheegayu went into the interior of the country and ruled their respective areas. Anuradha's area of control became Anuradhapura. King Panduwasadewa had two sons and a daughter. Daughter, Unmada Chithra was kept



incommunicado by his father king due to a prediction made by an astrologer that her son would kill his uncles to become the ruler of the country.

Prince Abhaya as the eldest son succeeded his father, king Panduwasadewa. Unmada Chithra's son, Pandukabhaya managed to kill his adversaries and become the king.

By B.C. 177, Indians, Dravidians who invaded the country captured the power in Anuradhapura. As a result, the first-generation inhabitants had to retreat to southern areas in the country and established the Kingdom of Ruhuna.

The South Indian king Elara ruled the country from 205 B.C. for 40 years. He was defeated by Dutugemunu who ruled the country from Anuradhapura, his capital city.

After Dutugemunu, the country was continuously invaded by South Indian invaders. Anuradhapura era which lasted for nearly 1,400 years finally came to an end in 1017 A. D. due to threats from South Indians. The kingdom was eventually shifted to Polonnaruwa but repeated invasions by the South Indians, the Sinhalese had to further retreat to the South of the country.

King Vijaya Bahu I, who came to power in 1070 A. D. made Polonnaruwa his capital city. His rule lasted till 1110 A. D. Again, the internal conflicts started and the country was heading for its ruination. In 1153 A. D., king Parakramabahu managed to bring the entire country under his rule making Polonnaruwa his Capital.

The Dravidians who invaded the country finally settled-down in the areas north to Anuradhapura. Later, these areas too were captured by the Portuguese who ruled the northern coastal areas from 1620 A. D.

The invasion by Magha, an invader from Kalinga area in South India, who invaded the country in 1215 A. D. destroyed the entire Polonnaruwa kingdom. The enormous destruction he caused to the civilisation of the country is immeasurable. The depth of the ruination caused by Magha was so intense

it could hardly be measured or visualized from the remaining archaeological sources or ruins alone.

After the collapse of the Polonnaruwa kingdom, the country was unified again by the king Parakramabahu VI in 1410 A. D. He ruled from his kingdom established in Kotte. Kotte kingdom however, could not be protected from the Portuguese who came to the country in 1505 A. D. as the kings who succeeded the King Parakramabahu VI were very weak royals.

The Portuguese destroyed the entire kingdom of Kotte by setting fire to it, consequent to the betrayal of king of Don Juan Dharmapala who preferred to live in the fortress belonging to Portuguese.

As a precaution against the invasions by the enemy forces, the kingdom was shifted from Kotte to Seethawaka (1521 – 1593 A. D. ) and later to Kandy (1590 – 1815 A. D.) The coastal areas of the country were ruled by the Portuguese (1505 – 1658 A. D.) Later, these areas were ruled by the Dutch from 1640 to 1796 A. D. The whole country was captured by the British and made it a colony of the Britain in 1815 A. D.

### 1.3.2

## **1505 – 1739**

### **The Sinhalese kings who were deceived by the Foreign Invaders**

De Lapoo Soarace Lapageria, the Portuguese Governor of India, with an army of about thousand soldiers reached Colombo by a fleet of twenty-seven crafts in 1518 A. D.. It was the time of the king, Dharma Parakramabahu IX who ruled the country. The crafty Portuguese generals who successfully practiced all their trickeries in India, played a hoax on the king and requested for a land with an extent of only a hide of an oxen, to construct a

Fortress for them to be stationed. On receiving the consent of the king, what the Portuguese did was to make a long belt with the hide and to measure a suitable land, the extent of which was much larger than the extent the king had in his mind. It was really a case of great deception by which the king was deceived. The construction of the Fortress in Colombo by a western power was the first step, the Europeans took in establishing their presence in Ceylon.

The crafty Portuguese who devised and implemented a multitude of deceptions in manoeuvring their presence in the coastal areas of the country directed all their operations from the Fortress in Colombo, till they lost their domination to the Dutch over the country in 1658 A. D. The last Fortress they held in the island was the Fortress built by them in Jaffna.

The advent of Portuguese was the starting point of the domination of the country by Europeans. It was also a crucial turning point in the history of the country. The colonizers, Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British exploited the country extensively and took away everything that could be repatriated. leaving the country bankrupt and corrupt.

A grandson of king Buwanekabahu, Don Juan Dharmapala who secured the support of Portuguese managed to succeed King Buwanekabahu. He reigned the Kotte kingdom from 1551 to 1597 A. D., as a puppet of the Portuguese. As he married an up-country aristocratic lady with a king-ship, he inherited a right to the kingdom of up-country too. He did not have a son to succeed him.

The most treacherous and unfortunate action he took on 15th August 1580 A. D. was the bequeathing of the entire country, by way of executing a Deed of Gift, to the king of Portugal. He did this in return for the favours he received from the Portuguese.

The Dutch who came to the country had negotiations with king Rajasinghe to have a hand in the trade in cinnamons. In return, the king expected military support from Dutch to get

rid of and chase the Portuguese from the low country areas. Diego De Mello Castro, the Portuguese Captain who sensed this probable arrangement in advance, invaded the up-country with an army of 7,000 soldiers in 1638 A. D. As the king was away from the capital, in Gale Nuwara, engaged in organizing his army, the Portuguese easily entered the city of Kandy and destroyed the entire capital, with ease. On their way back to Colombo, the Portuguese army got encircled by the Sinhalese army in Gannoruwa, situated in the Mahaweli basin, a conclave. The ensuing battle called Gannoruwe Battle ended-up in annihilating the entire Portuguese army.

## 1.3.3

**1739 – 1815****The treacherous Aristocrats of up-country**

In Ceylon, the traditional system of inheritance of the Throne was either from the father to son or from the brother to brother. In case where this practice could not be adhered to, the throne then, would be bequeathed to a person descending from the Royal family. When the king Narendrasighe died sans, a son born to his Queen in 1739 A. D., there occurred a breakdown in the system of inheritance. Unambuwe Bandara, a son of Narendrasinghe who was born to a wife not descending from a royal family was not accepted as a qualified person to succeed the dead king, by the up-country aristocrats. In preference to Unambuwe Bandara, the up-country Sinhalese aristocratic chieftains consented to the enthronement of Narendrasinghe's queen's brother, a South Indian prince as the king. Accordingly, Nayakkar clan qualified to become the kings of the up-country kingdom of Sinhalese and there were three generations of them who ruled the kingdom one after the other up to 1789 A. D.

King Rajadhi Rajasinghe died sans a son to inherit the throne. He however, had nominated the prince, Muththusamy to succeed him. Aristocratic Chieftain, Pilimathalawe proposed the 18-year-old Prince Kannasamy as the successor to the king. Though most of the Nayakkars preferred to have Prince Muththusamy, as the king, the up-country aristocrats managed to appoint the Prince Kannasamy as the king. Kannasamy ascended to the throne as Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe.

Expectation, of the Chieftain Pilimathalawe was that Kannasamy the inexperienced minor, would listen to him for advice in the process of governing the country as the king. The king Kannasamy however, did not take Pilimathalawa into his confidence and the relationship between the two gradually got

distanced. Enraged Pilimathalawe's attempt to murder the king ended in failure. The king, angered over this incident, ordered the beheading of Pilimathalawe. He was executed by his own appointee in 1812 A. D.

Though Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe managed to become the king as a youngster, he encountered with difficulties in handling his ministers. The adversity developed between the chieftains, Ellepola and Molligoda became intense. They started in misguiding the king and also to stooped to carrying tales to the king, against one another. It was a blessing in disguise for the British rulers of the low-country who manipulated the developing conflicts among the Sinhalese aristocratic chieftains to their advantage in capturing the control of the up-country.

By then, Ehelepola had built up a close relationship with the British. Molligoda and the clan were able to convince the king Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe that Ehelepola was using his contacts with the British to become the up-country king, by overthrowing Rajasinghe, with their assistance. The angered Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe over this here-say, ordered the killing of the family of Ehelepola. This act made Ehelepola an angered enemy and gave all his secret support to the British to capture the up-country.

As the up-country kingdom was surrounded by mountain cliffs and difficult routs and under-passes, the Sinhalese were under the false belief that it could never be conquered by any invading enemy. The British who made this belief a farce, easily managed to send its army walking, without incurring any casualty, conquered the kingdom sans any resistance, on the 15th February 1815 A. D. , of course with the covert support of the up-country aristocratic chieftains.

The up-country aristocratic chieftains handed over the control of the entire country over to the British crown, by a written agreement signed on 2nd March 1815 A. D. It was a great treachery that the up-country aristocratic chieftains did in handing the country over to the Britton on a silver platter. Our heroic ancestors had safeguarded the sovereignty of the country

even at the cost of their lives for well over 2000 years from the date of the king Vijaya.

#### 1.3.4

## 1815 – 1948

### The Colonial Era

The anticipation of up-country aristocratic chieftains by deserting and later handing the last king over to the British army was only to replace the king and to enthrone Ehelepola in his place as their king and to send back the British army to Colombo. What really happened was that the British army took the entire country under their control and managed to consolidate their rule by 1815.

By 1818, the entirety of the people of the country was feeling frustrated and made known their displeasure to the British rulers. The Ceylonese started in getting organized in rebel groups, and later-on, under the leadership of Kappetipola, waged a severe confrontation, especially in areas like Uva, Wellassa and Dambana regions. The rebellions however, were short of arms and ammunitions and lacked in the required training. They were only successful in ambush and to attack British soldiers intermittently. The British soldiers were encountered with a major challenge due to their inability in identifying and differentiating the rebellions from the ordinary villagers. They resorted to mass executions in the rebelled areas in suppressing the rebellion. Of course, the British fighters had the advantage of the covert, supporting information supplied by the treacherous aristocrats of the up-country. They provided information to the British army giving vital materials on the hiding places of the lead fighters. The leaders including Kappetipola Dissawe were captured. Kappetipola was beheaded in Bogambara on the 25th of November 1818. It was one of the most tragic moments in the annals of the country.

As a consequence of starting commercial scale cultivation of coffee by the British, the rural community in the villages in up-country lost their cultivable lands. Under the circumstances, the rural population became mere spectators having no means of living. Not a single Sinhalese however was agreeable to work in the coffee plantations as laborers. As a result, the British government had to intervene and decided to bring down South Indian Tamil laborers numbering about 235,000 to work in the plantations.

The imposition of heavy taxation and the harsh governing rules enforced by the British rulers were intolerable. Another rebellion initiated in 1848 by Puran Appu, Gongalegoda Banda and Reverent Kudapola with the support of a large section of the population met with doom, though they were able to secure the control over a large swath of area and sustain their control over a considerable period of time. The British rulers killed Puran Appu by hanging him on the 8th of August 1848.

An opportunistic and unscrupulous sections of the Ceylonese, who were prepared to toe the line with the British rulers, manoeuvred the available opportunities to their advantage and acquired wealth and a status in life. The British rulers, through the appointment of Colebrook Commission in 1829, succeeded in achieving their objectives in establishing a trade dependent economy with the supporting infrastructure that included a conducive system of Civil Administration, a Judicial apparatus and a suitable education set-up in the country. With these changes introduced in the country, the system hitherto practiced in segregated deployment of people to occupations, depending on their cast, went through a dramatic change.

Those who made Ceylon a colony of Britain, expected to achieve several benefits from their mission. One of such lead objective was the development of the economy, based on commercial scale plantations. The British rulers also gave incentives to the local entrepreneurs who were prepared to investing in graphite mining and export. The British rulers facilitated such economic activities by developing of the necessary infrastructure



like the expansion of the Colombo harbour and the construction of road ways and railways.

Whilst the Portuguese were engaged in propagating catholic religion the Dutch invaders were responsible for the establishment of a Missionary school education system targeting the privileged sectors of the population.

The British rulers expanded on the system of education with the objective of creating the educated class necessary for the day-to-day administration of the government and the import, export and internal trading activities. The establishment of most of these schools in the Northern and Eastern regions of the country had its own hidden agenda of “Divide and Rule”. American Missionaries started a school, Baticota Semaneri Medical School, in Wadukkodai, in 1823, to teach medicine. The Jaffna St. Patrick College was started in 1850. The Anglican Missionary Schools, St. Thomas College in Mt. Lavenia was started in 1852 and The Trinity College, Kandy in 1872. Whilst the people with English education secured government employment and the others managed to get engaged in the occupations created by the plantation economy.

The generations coming from aristocrats and the king’s men were replaced by a wealthy capitalist class. The English educated privileged class sent their children to England for their higher education. Later, most of them became the politicians of the country.

The lead trail bracers like Anagarika Dharmapala, Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Siddi Lebbe who led the re-awakening movement in the country in 1850s worked against the missionary educated erudite fraternity who behaved as the stooges and tail-careers to the British rulers.

Lankopakara Printers and Lanka Visritha Printer were started in 1826 to help the Buddhist publications and other journalistic works made in Sinhalese.

The Sinhalese Buddhist schools were starting to come up and the pioneering American national, Henry Steel Olcott took the leadership in this sphere. The re-awakening in the Sinhalese school system was responsible for the creation of an erudite society in the country. The school going student population increased to 336,374 by 1910.

Sons of the soil, the down-trodden, who were under the foreign dominations for a very lengthy period, engaged in gathering knowledge and wisdom and came to grip with their glorious past and the rich inheritance through analytical newspapers, Journals and classics written by the erudite native writers. The backward, rural, native Sinhalese were able to acquire a regeneration in their culture and the religion.

C. W. W. Kannangara, who became the Minister of Education in 1945 was able to get the legislative approval to give free education by the state to all the students of the country, from the first grade up to the University.

Majority of the Sinhalese were inculcated with the aspiration of getting employment in the government sector through the education they received from the system of Government Central Schools.

In parallel to the developments taking place in the south, Arumugam Navalur started the Shivangal College in Jaffna in 1872 and a printing press to publish the Udhayabhanu newspaper and the other Tamil medium publications, aiding the objective of achieving a re-awakening in the Hindu Religion. The lawyer, Ponnambalam Arunachalam established the Parameswara College and the Ramanathan College in Jaffna in 1907.

Siddi Lebbe, with the objective of re-awakening the Muslims and also to encourage them to learn Arabic language, started the Muslim Nation paper in 1882. T B Jaya pioneered in establishing the Sahira College Colombo and also a few Muslim schools in the provinces.

## 1.3.5

**1948 – 1960****First Twelve Years Since Independence**

(The initiation of politics led by the glitches based on ethnicity)

It is a fact that the Ceylonese never led a socio-political movement, designed with the aim of winning independence for the country from British. The reasons could be that of the mild governing policies the British adopted towards Ceylon, compared with that of India or the subtle and cordial understanding the local self-serving politicians had with the British authorities.

Post independent Ceylon did not achieve a significant economic development worthy of note. The rural population which accounted for well over 70% of the inhabitants of the country did not have a desired level of infrastructure, facilitating equitable distribution of resources in the country. They were left alone, to be petty scale subsistent farmers.

In the meantime, a minority of rich and privileged fraternity of the island, who had developed close relationships with the British rulers became an affluent segment of the citizenry of the country. After gaining independence, they became the rulers of the country too. They never attempted to design appropriate and conducive national policies directed towards all-rounded development in the country. They directed their political and electoral movements basing on controversial and ethnic-centred policies.

The founder of UNPD S Senanayake, became the first Prime Minister of the independent Ceylon. He was nurturing a policy-framework designed to preventing in obtaining of citizenship rights by the inhabitants with Indian origin, residing in the country at that time. This thinking and efforts were vehemently opposed by the founder of the Tamil Congress Party, G. G. Ponnambalam. The Tamil Congress Party in collaboration with

the Ceylon Indian Congress Party was engaged in a campaign struggle to safeguard the rights of the people with Indian origin, who worked as estate laborers. D S Senanayake, who died in 1952 had made arrangements to make his son, Dudley Senanayake to succeed him as the Prime Minister of the country. This resulted S W R D Bandaranayake the then deputy leader of UNP leaving the party and forming a new political party, Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP).

The civil disobedient movement and the agitation launched in 1952 by The Ceylon Indian Congress against the DS's Citizenship Act caused a fissure for the first time, among the ethnicities in the country.

In 1953, a nation-wide civil disobedient movement was launched by the leftist parties in the country against the proposals contained in the budget presented by the UNP Finance Minister J R Jayawardhana. As a result of this organized anti-government agitation, the entire State machinery, including the government offices, factories and the system of transport came to a standstill. The Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake resigned from his post and Sir Jhon Kothalawala succeeded him as the Prime Minister.

The stand taken by the Prime Minister Sir Jhon Kothlawala was that both Sinhala and Tamil to be made the official languages of the country. The firm stand taken by the Sinhalese was that only the Sinhalese should be made the official language, through-out the country.

SWRD used the language conflict to his advantage in the election held in 1956. With his victory at the elections, the Sinhalese agitated for making Sinhala, the official language of the country. The Tamil politicians who were against this move, started a civil disobedient campaign in 1957. This was led by the Federal Party. As a measure designed to solve the issue, SWRD expressed his willingness to make the Tamil as a language that could be used in the government offices of the North and the East.

The then leader of the opposition, J R Jayawardhana who criticized the agreement between SWRD and Chelvanayagam, used the Banda - Chelva pact to his advantage in his election campaigns.

The introduction of SRI in the vehicle numbering system in 1958 by the Ministry of Transport was vehemently opposed by the Federal Party. They demanded for the permission to use Tamil language SRI on the vehicles registered in the Northern and Eastern provinces. This demand and the agitation, subsequently, escalated to a large-scale ethnic strife.

### 1.3.5

## 1960 – 1977

### **Era dominated by the policies of Sirimavo Bandaranayake**

(Beginning of the terrorist movements)

Sirimavo Bandaranayake, who became the Prime Minister of Ceylon in 1964 was the first woman Prime Minister of the world.

She initiated an agreement with the then Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri to repatriate to India, 520,000 inhabitants with Indian origin, who were domiciled in Ceylon.

UNP, with the support of Federal party, decided to form a government in 1965. The agreement reached between Dudley Senanayake and S J V Chelvanayagam to form the government in 1965 included a clause relating to the implementation of an Act providing for the “Special Provisions for the use of Tamil Language as an Official Language”.

The United Front government of Sirimavo Bandaranayake that came to power in 1970 was inclined in implementing a system of socialist form of economic policies. As a part of these policies, the economy was turned in to a closed economy and the openness of the country to international trade was rather

restricted. The local arm of the multinational companies that were engaged in the inland-distribution of petroleum products were nationalized. The government imposed severe restrictions in operating private enterprises. Only the State sector was given the encouragement to engage in manufacturing industries. The monopoly for the manufacture of sugar, cement, tyres, steel and textiles was given to the State Corporations. As a result, the quality of the products became very inferior. The scarcity of essential products like foodstuff and other consumption goods was rampant in the country. The quality of the services provided by the State monopolies became much to be desired. Whilst the Gross Domestic Product of the country was very low, the magnitude of the wide spread unemployment among the youngsters rose to unmanageable heights. The quality of life of the rural folks in the country was appalling.

A section of the unemployed youngsters who got themselves organized under the banner of the JVP initiated an up-rising in the form of an armed insurrection against the government of Sirimavo Bandaranayake. This movement, initiated in 1964 by Rohana Wijeweera who was a student in Soviet Russia at the time, became an insurrection bent on capturing government power through an armed uprising. This movement launched its armed insurrection on the 5th of April 1971 by attacking 93 Police Stations, using locally made weapons like hand-grenades. The government used the powers of the emergency laws and was able to suppress the uprising within a short period of about a month. Whilst the death toll among the youth numbered 1,200 to 4,000 the number of insurgents surrendered to the authorities exceeded 18,000. The country became a Republic in May 1972.

The government in 1974, implemented a standardisation system, based on a formula giving a district quota for each district, for the selection of candidates to enter the Universities in the country. This scheme resulted in limiting the number of students selected from the Northern and Eastern districts, curtailing the opportunities available to the Tamil youth in entering the Universities. This new development resulted in creating a widespread frustration among Tamil youth. The new development

in the selection of candidates for University entrance resulted in inducing the Tamil youth in joining the terrorist groups that were mushrooming in the Northern area of the country. The armed terrorist groups that came-up early included the terrorist organizations like LTTE, EPRLF, PLOTE and TELLO.

It was pretty easy to attract Tamil youths, who came from the low-income families, to these organizations. The recruits were given guerrilla training. Among the trainees, there were the young women, the child soldiers and the prospective suicide bombers. The training received by these youngsters included specialised training in foreign countries like India and other western states.

The visit by Sirimavo Bandaranayake in 1974 to Jaffna was organized on a grand scale by Alfred Duraipappa, the Mayor of Jaffna. Duraipappa, who was labelled as a traitor of Tamils, was killed by the terrorists on 27th July 1975. The evidence emerged subsequently, implicating that the killing was done by Prabhakaran himself. 1.3.7

## **1977 - 1989**

### **Era of J R Jayawardhana**

#### **Eelam War - The First**

The Parliament election held in 1977 resulted in UNP winning 140 out of 168 seats. Whilst TULF won 18 seats the SLFP was left with only 8 seats. Subsequent to the change of government, an ethnic strife occurred during 1978 and about 100 Tamil civilians died, as a result.

With introduction new liberal economic policies and opening of the country's economy by the J R Jayawardhana government the life style of the population took a rapid turn to consumerism, bringing in some adverse repercussions.

Before the advent of new liberalism in the country, more than 70% of the population depended on a self-sufficient rural

economy where they made a living on subsistent agriculture and a kind of basic industrial activities like hand-loom. The advent of large-scale garment factories resulted in changing the village life style depriving the market for locally produced goods. Consequently, the demand for locally produced goods started to decline, gradually. The demand for the products made by the State Corporations declined and the State sector giants became non-viable. The result was the disposal of such loss-making ventures at asking prices. The government ventured on a policy of patronising the private sector enterprises. The expansion of the private sector however, was restricted to the services sector, restricting to only the lucrative areas like computer software, financial services, healthcare, tourism and the provision of private education. Local industries lost their appeal. The industrialization expected with the liberalization of the economy, did not materialize to the extent expected. The anticipated acceleration of the economy was lagging and the price inflation started to quicken, creating glitches like wide-spread poverty in semi-urban and rural areas. The vicious income distribution disparity in the country started to get widen. The pressure thrust on the populace, became un-bearable and burst-out in the form of an ethnic strife. The irresponsible utterings of Tamil politicians too helped in aggravating the repercussions, to a great measure.

The Jaffna District Council elections which were held in 1981 was contested by the UNP and the TULF. In one of the election rallies held, the UNP candidate, Thiagarajah and the two police constables guarding the stage were killed by the armed youngsters of Jaffna. With this incident, Jaffna came under severe repressive and antagonistic clamp-down. The shops belonging to Tamils were burnt. It was very well known over the world that the Jaffna library with 90,000 books including invaluable manuscripts was burnt to ashes.

In the meantime, in July 1983, thirteen soldiers belonging to the Sri Lanka Army were killed by the Tamil militants using land mines. On the date of their funeral in Colombo, organized



armed gangs created mayhem by burning houses and shops belonging to Tamils. The riots spread all over the country. The Tamil civilians were injured and killed throughout the country. The riots and malicious acts continued unabated for several weeks. As per the estimates done by a journalist Rajan Hool, the death toll of Tamils exceeded 2,000 individuals. As per the official estimates, the number of people injured was counted at 3,769 and the large-scale waylaying and thefts numbering 3,835 cases had occurred during the mayhem. Though, only the miscreants, a minute segment of the Sinhalese people, was responsible for such despicable acts of violence, the entire Sinhalese population was painted with the same brush, racist. This entire episode had been given the caption “BLACK JULY OF 1983.” As a consequence, a novel trend emerged in the Tamil community. Whilst the middle-class Tamils started a mass scale migration to European countries, the youngsters coming from low-income groups joining with the terrorist out-fits in large numbers.

It was clearly evident that the black July of 1983 was, to a large extent, responsible Tamil youngsters started joining the armed groups in large numbers. It was no secret that such new



*Burnt shell of the Jaffna Library*

recruits who managed to illicitly enter India using sea routes were provided with training in terrorist warfare. That episode was a kind of a deliberate programme, afforded and assisted by India. The recruits who were accommodated in camps in India were given the extensive training in spheres like using automatic weapons, rocket launches, heavy weapons, setting up of land-mines, map reading and warfare using armed tanks.

Sri Lankan forces launched the Operation Liberation One, on the 25th May 1987, with the objective of capturing the Vadamarachchi region. This being the first conventional operation started by the Sri Lankan forces, called the Eelam war one, was started on the 1st June 1987 from the Sri Lankan camps in Thondamanaru and Velvetithurai. The forces managed to capture Vadamarachchi sector. As a consequence, the Army was successful in expanding its writ over the land stretch from Kankasanthurai to the North East shore. Though, India expressed its displeasure and disagreement over this operation, Sri Lankan government did not take the Indian objection seriously and went ahead with its plans. Then, the annoyed Indian government dispatched a flotilla of ships for the purpose of carrying food and medicine and also to rescue and bring back the terrorists those who would have been encircled and stranded. On reaching of the flotilla of ships close to the Jaffna beach, they encountered a barricade created by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Indian flotilla retreated to Tamilnadu. India, as a tit-for-tat measure, flew its Airforce planes over Jaffna sky and air dropped food for the civilians. This action by India was later called, as the “Indian Parippu drop” operation.

Sri Lankan government was compelled to terminate its Vadamarachchi operations midway, due to the pressure exerted by India. Subsequent negotiations between the two countries, Sri Lanka and India resulted in signing an agreement called ‘Indo-Sri Lanka Pact’ between the Sri Lankan President, J R Jayawardhana and the Prime Minister of India, Rajeev Gandhi. As per the agreement, the Sri Lankan forces had to be withdrawn from the North and the East and an Indian Peace Keeping Force



*1983 July communal riots - courtesy of ANCL library*

(IPKF) had to be inducted to the country to disarm LTTE and to maintain peace in that part of the country. It was also a condition that IPKF should disarm all the terrorist groups by getting them to hand-over the arms possessed by them, within a period of 72 hours from the hour of signing of the agreement. About 80,000 Indian soldiers were enlisted to the IPKF operations in Sri Lanka.

As stipulated and compelled by the agreement, all terrorist groups, except the LTTE handed their armaments over to the IPKF. LTTE started clashes with the IPKF. The other armed groups that were sandwiched between LTTE, Sri Lankan forces and IPKF were operating under the constant pressure and started to get weaker by the day. The internal conflicts that were there within these groups too were responsible for their demise. The LTTE managed to eliminate most of the leaders in the other groups and became the most powerful and militarily strong terrorist organization. The terrorists in the other groups who survived the LTTE onslaught managed to immigrate to the European countries as refugees. The groups like PLOTE and EPRLF became established political parties in Sri Lanka.

This was the time of emerging various anti-government uprisings among Sinhalese youngsters, amidst the evolving Tamil terrorism in the North-East. The JVP carried its second armed up-rising during the period from 1987 to 1989. This insurgency commenced its operations during the era of J R Jayawardhana and ended-up in failure within the era of President Ranasinghe Premadasa. The JVP, in difference to their previous mode of insurgency in 1971, in which they resorted to attack police stations face to face started a clandestine killing spree this time, by murdering their adversaries including the relatives of the opponents. Among the adversaries they killed, included the government officers, police, and the members of the Armed Forces. It is very well known that the government, in its anti-insurgency operations, killed a large number of ordinary people as JVP suspects. The JVP instigated a stream of country-wide work-stoppages and even disrupted the distribution of government affiliated newspapers. They also resorted to enforce a kind of a “curfew” right-through-out the country. Their level of maturity in politics was so low they even stooped to indiscriminate killing of those who had views that were opposed to the way JVP was thinking on day-to-day politics.

At the same time, JVP tried to create an adverse opinion against the IPKF, among the people in the South.

## 1.3.8

**1989 - 1994****Era of Ranasinghe Premadasa****Eelam War - The Second**

The Presidential election of 1989 was won by Ranasinghe Premadasa by winning a 50.4% of the popular vote. His era was the most ill-fated period for himself as well as the entire Sri Lanka. In his own words, he said that the country was in such a precarious, right royal mess that he was helpless. In other words, he said that “the country he inherited sans peace, was not conducive for development. It was akin to a torch, burning from both sides”. What he meant by this uttering was that the North of the country had been made chaotic by the LTTE and the South by the JVP with their uncontrollable terror and wide-spread killings.

The clashes between JVP and their opponents resulted in mass killing of ordinary people in the South. Both parties were freely exhibiting the charred bodies of their victims in public places. The insurrection by the JVP ended with the arrest and killing of its leader Rohana Wijeweera on the 12th November 1989. It was reported that, in the process of subduing the insurrection, the government used para military death squads in its counter terror operations and had massacred more than 50,000 while the JVP was responsible for about 6,000 deaths.

President Premadasa initiated a dialog with the LTTE and it had been reported that he had gifted the LTTE with twelve truckloads of arms, with a view to please and attract them for negotiations.

The IPKF and the LTTE were engaged in clashes over a period of more than three years. While 1,200 of the IPKF soldiers were killed in these clashes about 2,900 of them were reported to have been injured. Later, in 1990, the IPKF soldiers were recalled

by India. The IPKF undertaking was a failure and the soldiers returned to India un-ceremoniously, the mission un-accomplished.

With the withdrawal of the IPKF, the jubilant LTTE consolidated its writ over the North and the East. They also manoeuvred the opportunity to their advantage and annihilated all other Tamil terrorist groups that were operating in the area and became the sole, surviving Tamil terrorist organization in the country. The LTTE was bestowed with a golden opportunity to kill about 600 un-armed police officers who obeyed the government instructions to surrender to the LTTE on 11th June 1990. Terrorists lined up and shot dead the police who surrendered. As it was the period of truce, the understanding the victimised police had was to surrender to the LTTE, in keeping with the instructions they received from the Police Head Quarters. The termination of the truce and the dialog that the government had with the LTTE were the end results of this massacre. That also became the starting point for subsequent launching of the second Eelam war.

On 29th October 1990, the LTTE ordered all Muslims to evacuate from Jaffna peninsula within a period of 48 hours. As a result, all Muslims numbering about 65,000 who lived in Jaffna peninsula for generations had to relinquish all their belongings and to live in places in other parts of the country as refugees. All efforts made during the Premadasa era to come to a compromise with LTTE had failed and the terrorists recommenced their activities terrorising the whole country.

On 2nd March 1991, the Minister of National Security Ranjan Wijerathna who was travelling by his official car to his Ministry office was killed by a bomb planted by the LTTE.

On 21st May 1991, the Prime Minister of India Rajeev Ghandi who was taking part in a political rally in Madras was killed by a LTTE woman, suicide bomber.

On 16th November 1992, the Vice Admiral, Clancy Fernando who was travelling in his official car was killed by a LTTE suicide motor bicycle rider who crashed his bicycle on to the car.

On 1st May 1993, the President Ranasinghe Premadasa was killed by a LTTE suicide bomber.<sup>1.3.9</sup>

## **1994 - 2005**

### **Era of Chandrika Kumaranathunga**

#### **Eelam War The Third**

The United front government of Chandrika Kumaranathunga that came to power in 1994 commenced a dialog with the LTTE with the intention of securing peace with them. These discussions however, failed with the destruction of two Fast Attack Crafts that were stationed in the Trincomalee harbour. It was the commencement of the third Eelam war.

The Sri Lankan forces managed to wrest the control of Jaffna peninsula from LTTE in 1995. The LTTE had to withdraw its cadres from the peninsula and retreat to Vanni area.

The LTTE from its inception had a dream of establishing a conventional armed force comprised of an Army, Navy and an Air Force and its forces were trained to shoulder the responsibilities of such an elevated out-fit, eventually. With the training and other support they received from foreign sources over a lengthy period, they had felt that it was not difficult for them to reach the desired stages, gradually.

The LTTE, though failed in their attempt, tried to assassinate the President Chandrika Kumaranathunga in 1999.

By 2002, the UNP captured the power again and Ranil Wickremasinghe became the Prime Minister while Chandrika Kumaranathunga was still remaining the President.

Sri Lankan government under the Premier Ranil Wickremasinghe, signed a Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) with the LTTE. The CFA had been the result of a mediation carried out by the government of Norway with the LTTE, the effort for which the Norway had the tacit support of the Sri Lankan government of Ranil Wickremasinghe.

As a consequence of the CFA, the Sri Lankan forces were confined to their camps and the LTTE took the advantage and had a free reign, strengthening its control over the areas in the North and the East. It was reported in the media that the Sri Lankan Navy who had caught the LTTE operators transporting arms and ammunitions in their small crafts, were asked to be released, sans appropriate action. The LTTE managed to transport some very powerful radio transmission sets from the main Air Port of the country to their territory, sans any form of scrutiny by the defence forces of the country. The LTTE even managed to get free helicopter rides from the Sri Lankan Air Force to provide for transport of their high rankers, facilitating discussions among LTTE regional heads.

The LTTE, during the period covered by the CFA, had managed to construct several new bases surrounding the strategically crucial points in the North and Eastern regions. They even had constructed the necessary cover bunds made of soil, vast trenches and new hiding bunkers facilitating hit and run tactics. They also had created stretches of mined fields obstructing operations by the Sri Lankan forces in the areas occupied by the LTTE carders. The LTTE which was weaker at the time of signing the CFA, became a force to reckon with, almost as powerful as the Sri Lankan Army.

On 31st October 2003, the LTTE demanded for an Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA status) for the areas in the North and the East. This demand was vehemently opposed by the patriotic forces of the South.



1.3.10

## **2005 - 2009**

### **Era of Mahinda Rajapakse**

Eelam War The Forth

#### **End of a Thirty-Year Insurrection**

Mahinda became the President of the country in 2005. By this time, the LTTE had graduated from guerrilla status to a conventional army, with capabilities to evict almost all the Sri Lankan army bases from its so-called Eelam territory. Their dream of establishing the so-called State of Eelam was almost achieved. As evident from the way they were winning the battles, they had managed to acquire ultra-advanced high-tech arms, far exceeding the sophisticated weapons used by the Sri Lankan forces.

Gradually, Sri Lankan armed forces too acquired more technologically advanced weapons. The Sri Lankan armed forces also ventured into guerrilla war-fare, to counter the attacks carried out by the LTTE in border villages in the North and the East. The Sri Lankan forces had acquired the sophistication necessary and managed to pierce through and attack the enemy strongholds. There were many instances where the Sri Lankan forces were successful in destroying or capturing the decisive maneuvering points.

The LTTE closed the Mavil Aru sluice gates and disrupted the activities of the farmers in the area. The Sri Lankan forces over-ran the area and kept open the gates making this operation as the crucial turning point, in the thirty-year-long insurrection.

By the time of commencement of the fourth Eelam war, the Navy as well as the Air Force too had acquired the necessary sophistication to shoulder their responsibilities.

The Navy further strengthened its fleet of Fast Attack Crafts to meet the challenges posed by the terrorists. The Navy managed to destroy about seven large ships used as arms supply stores that

were made to float in the seas close to Indonesia and Australia, making decisive dents into the power of the LTTE during the period from 2006 to 2007.

The establishment of the four covering rings of about forty attack crafts in the crucial points during February 2009 helped in providing the security to the civilians who were fleeing from the clutches of the terrorists. With the killing of the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabakaran, the Sri Lankan government managed to successfully conclude the thirty-year conflict on 18th May 2009.

The comfortable Parliamentary majority enjoyed by the Mahinda Rajapakse government helped in uninterrupted continuing with the war effort to its successful conclusion.



Courtesy of ANCL library

1.3.11

## **Civilian Massacres**

### **Re-location of Civilians**

As result of the thirty-year conflict, more than 29,000 members of the armed forces had to sacrifice their lives, while the number permanently disabled exceeded 19,000.

The mayhem crated and the countless number of massacre of civilians by the armed groups during the thirty-year conflict are enormous and un-precedent in the annals of Sri Lanka. The frequent use of claymores, suicide bombers and the detonators fixed to vehicles were unique in the chronicles of the country. The LTTE not only created such heinous crimes but annihilated all its enemy groups that included EPRLF, PLOTE and TELO. With the withdrawal of the IPKF in 1990, a greater part of the areas in the North and the East came under the writ of the LTTE. The domination of the LTTE which started in early 1980s continued up to the time of conclusion of the war in 2009. The civilians in those areas lost their birth rights and became virtually the prisoners of LTTE. Most of the people lost their inheritances in that part of the country. It was very well known that the LTTE imposed a very harsh tax regime in areas they were controlling and also engaged in forced recruitment of children as child-soldiers. Sri Lankan government had to clear about 100 square kilometres of land that were heavily mined by the LTTE with about 500,000 land-mines. Generally, all most all communities belonging to all three ethnic groups were displaced and suffered immeasurably, due to the conflict. The re-settlement of people in a way that would not create future ethnic strife, became the biggest challenge faced by the government, after the conclusion of the conflict.



Rescue lives of more than 100,000 civilians

## Section -2

### Protracted Eelam War The mythology of Eelam The thirty-year conflict

A “distinct land of birth” is the connotation of the Tamil word “Eelam”. Tamil Eelam refers to a discrete Tamil state. The purported Tamil state that the Tamil terrorists were trying to create included the entire Northern and the East areas of Sri Lanka.

The thirty year-long insurrection that was concocted by the “Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam,” (LTTE) the terrorist outfit intended to carve-out a separate state in the island, against the state of Sri Lanka is called the “Eelam war”. This insurgence that had its origin somewhere in early eighties ended up an utter failure in 2009. As a result of internationalization of the conflict and the meddling by vested foreign elements, the Sri Lankan state was compelled to have a sort of a dialog in the form of a peace building effort with the terrorists. Due to the intermittent truces arranged between the state and the insurgents to facilitate a sort of peace building, the state, on three occasions, had to restrain its efforts to defeat the terrorists.

The so-called peace talks that were arranged by forces outside the country with vested interests also had the covert support of local individuals with political ambitions sans foresight. The ultimate result was the acceleration of the minor-arm conflict to a dreadful one of the longest, full scale civil wars in the world entailing international repercussions. Similarly, once tiny Tamil Groups, after being trained and armed by powerful countries developed into sophisticated ruthless terrorist organizations ranked among the world’s deadliest. They also had the backing of

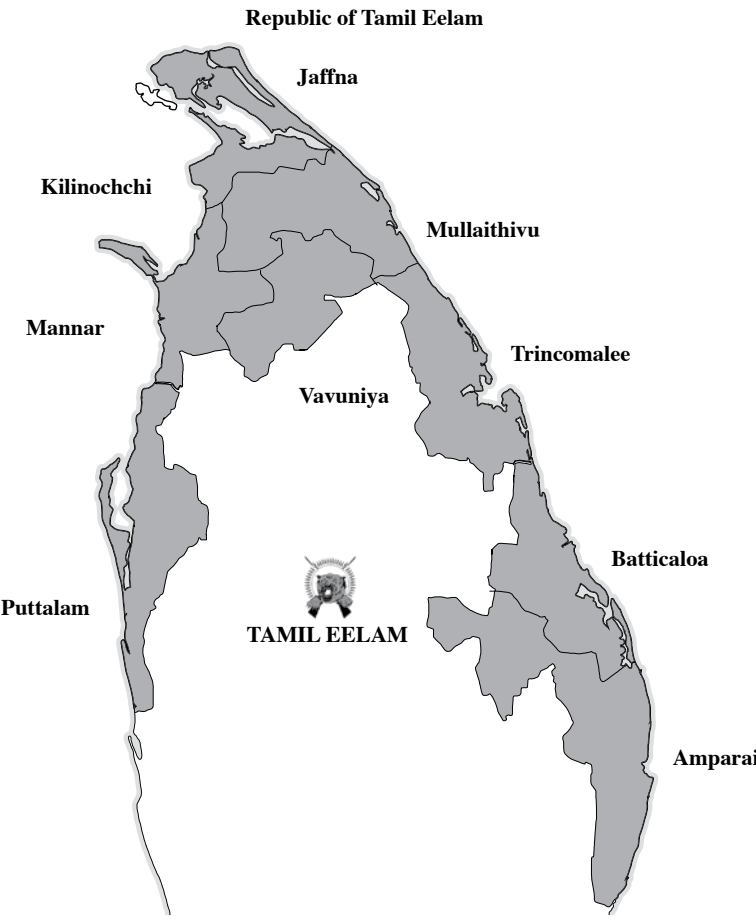
the well-knit international media houses who rated the insurgents to a higher plane in the world order.

The LTTE after destroying all the other Tamil Terrorist Organizations, consolidated its position as the most powerful terrorist organization supposedly undefeatable, they waged a thirty year long civil war terrorising the whole country leaving a gory trail of mayhem and wanton, destruction in their wake whatever they struck. They did not even spare centers of religious importance. Thus, they became the nastiest human rights violator in the world earning the hallmark to its credit, wanton mass killer of civilians in the world.

Finally, towards the end of the war, the Sri Lankan forces were able to confine the LTTE to a small land area about four square kilometers by the Nandikadal Lagoon. The LTTE made a futile effort to continue their fight by using 200,000 civilians as a human shield.

The unmatched capabilities, bravery, dedication shown and provers shown by the Sri Lankan forces in winning the war had been acclaimed world over. The number of Sri Lankan forces laid down their lives for this supreme endeavor exceeded 28,000 (Army 28,952, Navy 1168, Air force 445, Civil Defense 456, and Police 2,568). The number of permanently disabled armed forces exceeded 19,000 (Army 18,357, Navy 410, Air Force 234, Police 151)

The total number lost their lives (Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE) exceeded 50,000. It is on record that the number of civilians killed and/or missing in action exceeded 100,000.



2.1

Eelam war - I (1983-1989)

	Sri Lankan Military	LTTE
Leaders	President J R Jayawaradene	Velupillai Prabhakaran

The LTTE targeted the Sri Lankan forces on 23rd July 1983 by initiating a large-scale attack. The result was the killing of 13 soldiers who were guarding Jaffna town. This was the turning point in the ethnic clashes between the two communities that continued to drag for years to come.

The Tamil terrorist groups that included PLOTE, LTTE, EPRLF, TELO, EROS and TULF commenced a dialog with the Sri Lankan government in Thimpu, Bhutan on 13th July 1985. The failure of the discussions at this venue created an intense conflict in the country.

The Sri Lankan army's onslaught against the terrorists in 1987 called Vadamarachchi operation was successful in confining the terrorists to a corner in Jaffna peninsula. This was one of the successful instances where Sri Lankan forces managed to corner the terrorists and substantially weaken their armed capabilities. The Indian Government however, influenced by the Tamilians in South India numbering over 50 million, had to intervene and halt the operation halfway.

Though the Indian government wanted to halt the operation, the Sri Lankan state refused to accede to the Indian request. As a tit-for-tat, the Indian Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi sent its Navy, a flotilla bringing food and arms to the terrorists who were caught-up in a stretch of land in the north of Jaffna peninsula. The Sri Lankan Navy managed to create a blockade against the Indian fleet, resulting in India sending its Air Force planes that flew over Jaffna, under the pretext of sending food to Jaffna indicating that the civilians were starving for food and medicine.

At this point in time, Sri Lankan President J R Jayawardhana restrained his forces and agreed to discuss matters with the Indian government, resulting in the signing of an accord, the famous Indo-Lanka Accord between J R Jayawardhana and Rajeev Gandhi on 29th July 1987. As per this Accord, among other things, Sri Lankan government had to stop all operations against Tamil terrorists and India should take the responsibility to disarm the terror groups by stationing an Indian Peace Keeping

Force (IPKF) over the North and Eastern areas of the country. It was also a condition that all terrorist groups should hand-over their weapons to IPKF.



LTTE Diaspora

## 2.2

### Eelam war - II (1992-1994)

	Sri Lankan Military	LTTE
Leaders	President Ranasinghe Premadasa	Velupillai Prabhakaran

The Sri Lankans, whether they are Sinhalese, Tamils or Muslims they all disliked the IPKF operations in the country. The decision of Ranasinghe Premadasa who became the President in 1989 was to send the 80,000 strong IPKF back to India within a period of a year.

In the meantime, Premadasa government, knowing very well that LTTE detested the presence of IPKF in Sri Lanka, commenced a dialogue with LTTE. In fact, sending the IPKF back was one of the conditions of the talks between the government and the LTTE. The IPKF that was struggling to counter the heavy



onslaught thrust by the LTTE wanted to save face and to get back at the earliest opportunity. Although the IPKF was in Sri Lanka for nearly three years they could not bring peace to the country. During this period of IPKF operations in Sri Lanka, nearly 1,300 IPKF soldiers were killed by the LTTE. The number injured was nearly 2,900. Finally, the Indian Prime Minister Visvanath Prathap agreed with the request made by the Sri Lankan President to recall the IPKF. With the withdrawal of the last batch of the IPKF soldiers from Trincomalee on 30th March 1990 the LTTE happily re-established its dictates over the North and the East.

A dialogue, with the objective to achieve a sort of peace between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE commenced at the Colombo Hilton. Although there was some progress in the talks initially, the 6th Amendment to the Sri Lankan constitution and the dissolution of the North East provincial council paved the way for the collapse of the discussions and both parties withdrew from the table.

In view of the ongoing dialogue between the government and the LTTE and the false hopes that were given by the LTTE to the government, the Armed forces were ordered to be confined to their camps.

As the so-called peace talks were collapsing, the LTTE twisted its modes operandi and managed to encircle about 600 policemen who were on duty in the East. These unarmed policemen who were asked by the government to surrender to LTTE were gunned-down by LTTE. It was a very pathetic and frightening situation that occurred on 10th June 1990, where these police personnel had been asked by the Sri Lankan government to surrender to the LTTE, paving the way for this holocaust.

By October 1990, the LTTE chased away about 63,000 Muslims from their permanent residences in the Northern Province.

With the LTTE massacre of about 600 policemen, the then Deputy Defence Minister Ranjan Wijerathna declared

in Parliament that the government would be compelled re-commence the armed operations against the LTTE.

By this time, the LTTE had extended its writ over most of the areas that were dominated by the Army and the Police. By July 1990, various Tamil armed groups have managed to gridlock most of the ranges in Jaffna peninsula and had barred the government troops moving in the regions. By this time, it was clearly evident that the Tamil armed groups were dominating the North and the East.

During this period the heroism of the following Armed Forces personnel were known to have taken place leading to be the Parama Weera Vbhushanaya Medallists of Eelam War II

1. Captain S U Aladenya/ 11 July 1990/ Kokavil
2. Corporal Y G G Kularatne/ 13 July 1991/ Elephant Pass
3. Lieutenant K W T Nissanka/ 11 November 1993/ Pooneryn

### 2.3

## **Eelam war - III (1995-2002)**

	Sri Lankan Military	LTTE
Leaders	President Chandrika Bandaranayake Kumaratunga	Velupillai Prabhakaran
Strength	Around 247,000	18,000 – 24,000
Casualties	Around 7,838	Around 2,876

The United Front government that came to power in 1994 re-commenced dialogue with the LTTE to arrive at a solution to the conflict. The Sri Lankan Government unilaterally declared a truce on 8th January 1995 which lasted only for a period of

100 days. With the termination of the truce LTTE detonated two bombs and destroyed two of the Fast Attack Crafts belonging to the Navy that were stationed in the Trincomalee harbour.

The LTTE, being engaged in a long-drawn-out conflict, became a formidable force to be reckoned with. The training they received through foreign sources and the acquisition of modern weaponry, were very helpful in LTTE becoming a very powerful military out-fit. They were able to acquire anti-aircraft guns too. They used a few of the anti-aircraft missiles and managed to destroy number of Sri Lankan Air Forces aircrafts, that flew over the Jaffna Peninsula.

Though the Sri Lankan forces were able to retain their writ over the Jaffna Peninsula the LTTE managed to completely destroy the Army Bases in Punareen and Mullativu. In the battle for Mullativu close to 1,600 Sri Lankan soldiers lost their lives or got injured seriously.

The Parliament elections of 2001 resulted in bringing UNP into power and Ranil Wickremasinghe became the Prime Minister. The Norwegians who mediated between the LTTE and the government arranged for discussions with the LTTE to find a lasting solution for the conflict. The process finally resulted in a Cease Fire Agreement between the government and the LTTE in December 2001.

This era witnessed the herorism of the following Armed Forces Personnel leaching to become the Parama Weera Vbhushanaya Medallists of Eelam War III

1. Staff Sergeant H P B Gunasekara/ 30 November 1995/ Chiruthivu
2. Lance Corporal W I M Senaviratne/ 4 July 1996/ Jaffna
3. Colonel A F Lafir/ 19 July 1996/ Mullativu
4. Major G S Jayanath/ 4 December 1997/ Mankulam
5. Lieutenant J D L Wijetunga/ 30 March 1996/ Chalai
6. Wing Commander T D S Silvapulle/ 19 December 1999/ Thamilamadam

**58** → **TASK FORCE 2** →  
Division

**57** → **TASK FORCE 3** →  
Division

**59** → **TASK FORCE 4** →  
Division

**04 Sep 2007**  
Sampoor

**08 Aug 2007**  
Maruli Aru

**21 Jan 2007**  
Vakarai

**12 July 2007**  
Thoppigala

**02 Sep 2007**  
Silavethura

**16 May 2008**  
Palampalayam Town

**16 July 2008**  
Vidattativu Town

**22 Aug 2008**  
Thumakkai Towns

**29 Oct 2008**  
Akkaryankulam Tank Inland

**29 Oct 2008**  
Nachchikula

**13 Nov 2008**  
Devil's Point & Vailaipadu

**15 June 2008**  
Peryiamadu Village

**02 Jan 2009**  
Trincomalee Town

**01 Jan 2009**  
Parantam

**28 Jan 2009**  
Visuamadu Town

**05 Feb 2009**  
Chalai

**21 Aug 2008**  
West of Nayaroo Lagoon

**25 Jan 2009**  
Mullaitivu Town

**04 Jan 2009**  
Oodussudan Town

**12 Jan 2009**  
Nedunkerni

**17 Nov 2008**  
Marikattu

**04 Dec 2008**  
Puliyankulam

**23 May 2008**  
Mundurumappu

**24 Apr 2008**  
Madhu Church Complex

## Eelam war - IV (2006-2009)

	Sri Lankan Military	LTTE
Leaders	President Mahinda Rajapaksa	Velupillai Prabhakaran
Strength	Around 200,000	18,000 – 30,000
Killed	Around 20,000	15,000 – 20,000
Wounded	Around 10,000	unknown

The closing of sluice gates of Mawil Aru, a tributary of Mahaweli River supplying irrigation water to the farm lands in

Trincomalee area, by the LTTE and the government's reaction to it was the starting of fighting again, in July 2006. The first phase of this operation lasted for about a year and the Sri Lankan forces were able to consolidate their writ over the entire Eastern Province, by over-running the highly fortified LTTE territories that included Thoppigala. The main theatres of war in this operation included the places like Sampur, Vakara, and Thoppigala. The LTTE prevented the civilians fleeing from these areas and as per the estimates done by the World Health Organization, about 200,000 to 300,000 people in the area had been displaced. The last battle that took place in the Nanthikadal bay area was the historic encounter making it the most decisive battle. About 300,000 civilians that were used by the LTTE as a human shield were caught-up in the area. On 18th May 2009, the Sri Lankan forces were able to completely annihilate the terrorists and consolidate their writ over the areas that were hitherto controlled by the LTTE. The LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran died in this battle and finally, it was the end of the terrorist adventure.

During this period the heroic actions of the following Armed Force Personnel lead to being recognised as the Parama Weera Vbhushanaya Medallists of the Eelam War IV

1. Lieutenant Colonel A J L Jayasinghe/ 20 November 2008/ Oddusudan
2. Major K A Gamage/ 20 April 2009/ Ampalavanpokkanai
3. Captain U G A S Samaranayake/ 2 March 2009/ Pudukuduiruppu
4. Captain H M K I Megawarna/ 2 March 2009/ Pudukuduiruppu
5. Sergeant H G S Bandara/ 17 May 2009/ Nandaikadal
6. Sergeant P N Suranga/ 14 August 2006/ Nagarkovil
7. Corporal P M N Pushpa Kumara/ 1 February 2009/ Vishvamadu A 35
8. Corporal D M S Chandrasiri Bandara/ 3 February 2009/ Pudukuduiruppu

9. Corporal K Chandana/ 25 July 2008/ Mankulam
10. Lance Corporal R M D M Ratnayake/ 11 May 2009/ Challai
11. Corporal A M M P Abeysinghe/ 25 July 2008/ Thunukkai
12. Lance Corporal A M B H G Abeyratne Banda/ 29 January 2009/ Visuamadu
13. Lance Corporal Dayananda/ 16 September 2008/ Kilinochchi
14. Captain P N Punsiri/ 2 July 2007/ Palampiddi
15. Lieutenant W C Jayathilake/ 20 April 2009/ Iranamadu
16. Sergeant K G N L R Perera/ 21 April 2009/ Pudumathalan
17. Sergeant K P D T Gunasekara/ 16 February 2009/ Pudukuduiruppu
18. Corporal H A Nilantha Kumara/ 29 January 2009/ Nilaweli
19. Corporal S V A M Pushpamal/ 21 April 2009/ Puthumathalan
20. Major W M S B Walisundara/ 11 August 2006/ Nagarkovil
21. Sergeant A M Anura/ 11 November 2007/ Periyampanei
22. Lance Corporal K G M Rajapakse/ 22 December 2008/ Adampan
23. Chief Petty Officer K G Shantha/ 1 November 2008/ Nagarkovil

## **Section-3**

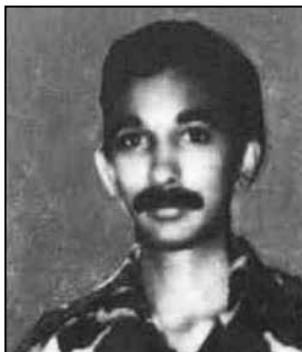
### **The Acts of Gallantry that Earned the 32 Parama Weera Vibhushanaya (PWVs)**

Members of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces who die in action are promoted to a rank posthumously.

This elevated rank is sometimes not noted in the media. To avoid confusion, in this book, the PWV recipients are referred to by the rank they held at the time of their death.

## Sri Lanka Army

### 3.1 Captain S U Aladeniya O/3113



The unit : 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion,  
Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment  
(Volunteer)  
Place of death : Kokavil  
Date of birth : 1st May 1963  
Action of Heroism : 11th July 1990  
Age : 27 years  
Medal honoured date : 10th October 1991  
Marital status : Married  
Mother : E Wijesinghe Aladeniya  
Father : S M Kudabanda Aladeniya  
Wife : Ayantha  
Address : 109/1, Lewalle Road, Kandy  
Awards : Parama Weera Vibhushanaya



The first recipient of the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya was Saliya Upul Aladeniya, a Volunteer Officer of the Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment. Aladeniya refused to leave his injured soldiers behind and continued to fight until his detachment was completely overrun by the LTTE.

Saliya was born in Kandy on 1st May 1963. His mother, E Wijesinghe Aladeniya was a house wife. The Father Kudabanda Aladeniya was a Planter and a Volunteer Force Army Officer. He had an elder sister Udeni and a younger brother Chaminda in his family. Saliya received his school education from Trinity College, Kandy.

After completing his school education Saliya started working as a Planter. He joined the Sri Lanka Army in 1989. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment Volunteer force after his initial military training. He got married to Ayantha Abeysinghe.

The Kokavil army camp nearby Mankulam was set up to guard the Rupavahini Television Relay Station. After the outbreak of the Second Eelam War, Mankulam and Kokavil were in danger of an imminent Tiger attack. Second Lieutenant Aladeniya was in command of Kokavil with 43 soldiers when the attack took place.

Surrounded and outnumbered five to one, Aladeniya and his detachment held off the Tigers for 14 days. The detachment had suffered heavy casualties, and ammunition, medical supplies, food and water were running short. There were no signs of reinforcements being sent. Reinforcements sent from Vavuniya to relieve Aladeniya's detachment never made it to Kokavil.

By June 10th, only 15 soldiers were still left uninjured and ammunition was down to only 300 rounds. Resupply helicopters were unable to reach the detachment through heavy Tiger fire.

On June 11th, in radio contact with Aladeniya, his battalion commander ordered him to withdraw from the Relay Station. Aladeniya was more concerned about his seriously

wounded men, who could not be moved. He ordered the soldiers who could walk to abandon the Relay Station and withdraw. Aladeniya chose to stay with the wounded and fight to his death.

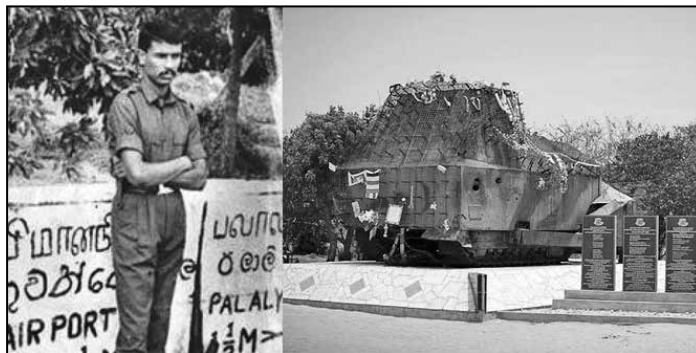
Shortly afterwards, the Tigers detonated an adjacent fuel storage and overran Aladeniya's perimeter. Aladeniya is believed to have been killed in the explosion. He is listed as "missing, believed killed".

Aladeniya was posthumously promoted to the rank of Captain and honoured with Parama Weera Vibhushanaya on 10th October 1991.

## 3.2 Corporal Y G Gamini Kularatne

(Commonly known as Hasalaka Gamini)

**S/34553**



The unit	: 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment
Place of death	: Elephant Pass
Date of birth	: 22nd November 1966
Action of Heroism	: 13th July 1991
Age	: 25 years
Medal honoured date	: 10th October 1991
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: Y G Juliet
Father	: Y G Babanis
Address	: Weera Sebala Niwasa, 1 Ela, Hasalaka
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

Gamini Kularatne, commonly known as ‘Hasalaka Gamini’ was the second to be honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. He is the best known among all PWV heroes.

Gamini received his primary education at Ranasinghe Premadasa Maha Vidyalaya at Hasalaka. He is the second in a family of four brothers and a sister. He joined the Sri Lanka Army on 22nd August 1987. After initial military training, he was assigned to the 6th Battalion of Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment.

The 800-man garrison that held Elephant Pass, the gateway to Jaffna peninsula came under a massive attack launched by more than 5000 Tiger terrorists on 10th July 1991, a year after the outbreak of Eelam War II. During that period, Elephant Pass was the only access point to reach Jaffna by land. Capturing Elephant Pass was of paramount importance to the Tiger terrorists because of its strategic location.

Tiger terrorists brought in heavy anti-aircraft cannons and this made air resupply of the camp impossible. For the next three days, the 6th Battalion of the Sinha Regiment held off the Tiger terrorists taking heavy casualties.

Using their superior numbers, Tiger terrorists sent wave after wave of attackers to overrun the riflemen, but the 6th Sinha Battalion held tight and repulsed each attack.

On 13th July 1991 the Tiger terrorists overran the Rest House Camp. This strong point was in the sector protecting the southern side of the causeway. The riflemen retreated to their 2nd line of defence centered on the Saltern Siding strong point.

At sunset, the Tiger terrorists changed their tactics. They sent an Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) – a converted caterpillar bulldozer with heavy weapons mounted- towards the Saltern Siding. The defenders were pinned down against the hail of fire directed from the AFV and Tiger infantry followed in its wake.

Flattening a bunker, the AFV breached the perimeter. Defenders were rendered helpless against this unstoppable mechanized monster advancing towards them spewing fire. The southern perimeter was about to be overrun.

Lance Corporal Gamini Kularatne and another rifleman were manning another bunker further down the line. Realizing that there was no stopping the AFV by ordinary means, Gamini flung his assault rifle aside and picked up a grenade in each hand. He ordered his comrade to provide covering fire and made for the AFV.

He darted through the heavy crossfire between the advancing Tiger terrorists and the next line of defence. Though hit several times, Gamini didn't give up. He managed to reach the rear of the AFV and scaled its ladder. He hauled himself onto the AFV and killed the four-man crew detonating the grenades. The AFV was neutralized. Gamini fell to the ground in the explosion. The Sinha Regiment's riflemen then counterattacked and secured the perimeter. They found Gamini dead on the road, of his injuries. He had saved the camp at the moment of supreme danger.

The heavy fighting went on for another 18 days. After an amphibious landing 12km away, reinforcements reached the besieged garrison. Thus, the LTTE failed to capture the Elephant Pass camp. It marks one of the most brutal and fiercest battles of Sri Lanka's modern history. The victory of this battle would not have been possible if not for the selfless act of bravery of Lance Corporal Gamini Kularatne.

In appreciation and recognition of his supreme act of gallantry, Lance Corporal Gamini Kularathne was posthumously promoted to the rank of Corporal and awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya on 10th October 1991.

A monument to commemorate the gallant act of Corporal Kularathne was constructed at Elephant Pass after the war. The remnants of the armoured bulldozer tank he destroyed stands beside it. This monument can be seen on the A9 road on the way to Jaffna. In tribute to this war hero, local musician Dhanapala Udawatte sang a song called 'Hasalaka Gamini'. His story was featured in the Readers' Digest magazine hailing him as a great hero – in fact this was the first time that the world famous magazine had a feature on the conflict in Sri Lanka.

### 3.3 Lieutenant K W T Nissanka

**O/61672**



The unit	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Gajaba Regiment
Place of death	: Pooneryn
Date of birth	: 21st October 1971
Action of Heroism	: 11th November 1993
Age	: 22 years
Medal honoured date	: 4th February 1996
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: K P Dayawathi.
Father	: K W Karunaratne
Address	: 61/8, Lieutenant Nissanka Mawatha, Pahala Imbulgoda, Imbulgoda, Gampaha
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

Nissanka studied at D S Senanayake Vidyalaya Colombo. He represented the School Rugby Team and was a Sergeant in the Cadetting Team.

2nd Lt. K W T Nissanka was a Platoon Commander in the 3rd Battalion of the Gajaba Regiment which had been sent to Pooneryn mainly to help protect the Nagathevanthurai Naval Base. Because of its strategically advantageous location, it dominated the whole western part of the Jaffna Lagoon. Sri Lanka Navy Gunboats of this base prevented the free movement of Tiger craft in the lagoon and around the City of Jaffna itself.

During the early hours of 11th November 1993, Tigers launched a massive land and seaborne attack on the Nagathevanthurai Naval Base and Sri Lanka Army positions close to Pooneryn. The Tiger Commandos had earlier infiltrated the perimeter and along with the main assault team, they managed to overrun the strong points and many bunkers housing heavy support weapons. Taken unawares, the Gajaba defences collapsed under the intense attack. With Tigers already inside the perimeter lines, it was not possible to put up an organized resistance. The defending soldiers formed small groups and fought back to the best of their ability. There was no way for reinforcements to be sent because the whole perimeter including the battalion Head Quarters was under intense attack.

Nissanka's platoon which was deployed at the battalion perimeter just outside Pooneryn came under attack at around 0130 hours. Nissanka's Platoon fought back and they repulsed the first attack. However, the Tigers regrouped and mounted a second assault and the Platoon was simultaneously attacked from the rear by the Tigers already inside the defence lines. The situation worsened being attacked from both the front and rear which began to take its toll on the Platoon.

As the fighting intensified, Nissanka continued to move from bunker to bunker, encouraging his men and directing their fire with complete disregard for his own safety. He was shot in the thigh and badly wounded. By 0500 hours most of Nissanka's Platoon were either killed or wounded. Due to intense enemy fire, the few unhurt soldiers were unable to evacuate the wounded.

Nissanka still stayed in command in excruciating pain and more Tigers were pouring into the attack.

With yet another assault forming, Nissanka realized that his Platoon was doomed. He decided to hold the Tigers off while his few remaining uninjured men tried to withdraw to a safer position with the wounded. Finally he removed the pins of two grenades and rushed towards the approaching Tigers with a grenade in each hand. He was hit several times but managed to get into the midst of them and detonate the grenades. Many Tigers were killed and wounded and Nissanka also died in the blast.

The disruption to the Tiger assault made it possible for some of his men to retreat to safer grounds with their casualties. Both Pooneryn and Nagathevanthurai fell with heavy casualties amongst both Gajaba and Sri Lanka Navy troops.

2nd Lt. Nissanka was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanya in 1996 for the selfless heroism he displayed in the battlefield.



### 3.4 Staff Sergeant H P B Gunasekara, S/77304



The unit	: 10 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gajaba Regiment
Place of death	: Chiruthivu
Date of birth	: 04th September 1964
Action of Heroism	: 30th November 1995
Age	: 31 years
Medal honoured date	: 10th October 1998
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: Padma Malani
Father	: H Jinadasa Gunasekara
Address	: 44, Amara villa, Jaburalia, Madapatha, Piliyandala
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Weera Wickrama Vibhushanaya Rana Wickrama Padakkama Rana Sura Padakkama

Pasan Gunasekara was born in 1964 in Millewa. Gunasekara was the youngest in his family.

After the death of his father he started work at a local ayurvedic medicine factory. There, he met a retired army officer who inspired him to join the Sri Lanka Army.

In 1985, Gunasekara joined the Army and was assigned duty primarily in the Northern Region. The major military operations he had fought include Vadamarachchi, Haye Pahara, Balavegaya 1 and 2, Vanni Wickramaya 1, 2 and 3. During battle Gunasekara had been shot in the stomach at Vavuniya. At that point, his Commanding Officer had shown concern over the state of his health and wanted him to be transferred to Colombo, but Gunasekara had insisted that he wished to continue his deployment in Jaffna.

Gunasekara was urgently called back to Jaffna in 1995. He had been on leave at the time and was preparing to travel overseas to follow a course. These plans had to be cancelled abruptly as he was needed for Operation Riviresa, where he was destined to sacrifice his life for his Motherland.

Operation Riviresa was in progress when the Sri Lankan Armed Forces were on the brink of taking control over the Jaffna town on 29th November, 1995. The enemy was retaliating fiercely from within the perimeters of the town area where they garnered the support of their Sea Tiger troops as well. Sea Tigers were actively involved in using their vessels to transport supplies and casualties. The boats were operating by night, and as many as 300 sorties were run under the cover of darkness, reinforcing and resupplying the Tigers in Jaffna.

These boats were given cover by some LTTE troops positioned in the tiny islet of Chiruthivu. This islet was between the Jaffna town and Mandathivu island where troops of the Gajaba Regiment were based. Due to this strategic positioning of the enemy, for the boat traffic to be stopped, Chiruthivu had to be taken and held.

Gunasekara volunteered to lead the team and landed on Chiruthivu by an improvised raft at around 2.00 am with a troop of 16 men. They secured the islet after driving off the Tigers.

Gunasekara then set up a fire base and engaged Tiger boats with rifle, machine-gun and RPG fire. For almost 48 hours, Gunasekara and his men exchanged heavy fire with Sea Tiger boats and successfully stopped the seaborne resupply of Jaffna until his detachment was finally relieved at 9.00 pm on November 30th, but by then Pasan Gunasekara had died of wounds sustained in the firefight with the Tiger boats. On December 1st, the Sri Lanka Army captured Jaffna.

Staff Sergeant Pasan Gunasekara was posthumously promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2 and awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya to recognize his gallant deeds during Operation Riviresa.

### 3.5 Lance Corporal W I M Seneviratne

**S/15296**



The unit	: 7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Light Infantry
Place of death	: Jaffna
Date of birth	: 3rd May 1969
Action of Heroism	: 4th July 1996
Age	: 27 years
Medal honoured date	: 10th October 1998
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: R M Punchihamy
Father	: I W H Gunawardana
Address	: Kapugama, Kobeigane
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhumi Padkkama

Lance Corporal W.I.M. Seneviratne joined the Sri Lanka Army in 1987. On 4th July 1996, Seneviratne was killed whilst attempting to protect

Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva from an LTTE suicide attack during one of his visits to the North. In recognition of Seneviratne's selfless courage, he was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

Born to a family of paddy farmers in Kobeigane, Kurunegala, Senevirathne yearned to join the Sri Lanka Army even as a child. He completed his education up to GCE Ordinary Levels at Parakrama Maha Vidyalaya in Kobeigane and joined the 7th Battalion of Sri Lanka Light Infantry in 1987. Senevirathne served in Trincomalee, Ampara and Jaffna during the course of the civil war after receiving training from the Army Training School in Maduru Oya. In the battlefields of Elephant Pass and Palaly, Senevirathne had been injured thrice.

Jaffna was regained by the Sri Lanka Army in 1995. Jaffna being the largest city in the northern region of Sri Lanka, had been under the control of the LTTE since late 1980s. Seneviratne was assigned as a member of the Army Quick Reaction Team (QRT) in the 51st division. The QRT consisted of troops mounted on motorbikes and in Land Rovers.

Seneviratne was tasked with the duty of providing protection to Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva, the then Minister of Housing and Public Utilities. As the Chairman to the Presidential Task Force on Northern Rehabilitation at the time, the Minister was to officially open the new Building Materials Corporation outlet on Stanley Road during his visit to Jaffna.

After the conclusion of his work, the Minister was about to board his vehicle at around 12.45 p.m. A woman who appeared to be pregnant carrying two bags in her hands approached the entourage. Seneviratne was on his bike when he noticed the woman. He was approximately 20 meters behind the Minister's vehicle and instinctively realized the possibility of the woman being a suicide bomber. Immediately Seneviratne gunned the motorbike towards her and cutting diagonally across the road, blocked her path. At once the woman detonated explosives

strapped to her body killing herself, Seneviratne and more than 20 others in the blast.

Seneviratne's selfless act of literally shielding the Minister with his own body and preventing the suicide bomber getting closer saved Minister De Silva's life. Brigadier Ananda Hamangoda, commander of the 512 Brigade that held Jaffna also died in the blast.

Lance Corporal Seneviratne was recommended to be awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanya by his Commanding Officer for sacrificing his own life to save Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva. The medal was presented to Seneviratne's mother by President Chandrika Kumaratunga on 10th October, 1998.

## 3.6 Colonel A F Lafir

**O/50981**



The unit	: 1 <sup>st</sup> Regiment, Special Forces
Place of death	: Mullaitivu
Date of birth	: 26th December 1958
Action of Heroism	: 19th July 1996
Age	: 38 years
Medal honoured date	: 24th April 2001
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: S L N Hanoon Lafir
Father	: Dr. Lafir
Wife	: Anoma
Address	: A04/03/02, Manning Town Housing Scheme, Colombo 8
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Wickrama Padakkama Rana Sura Padakkama

Lieutenant Colonel A.F. Lafir was the Commanding Officer of the 1st battalion of the Special Forces. Lafir played an integral

role in the formation of the Special Forces from the original core group, the Combat Tracker Team.

Lafir completed his education at St. Anthony's College, Katugastota and soon after joined the Sri Lanka Army as a cadet officer. He was transferred to the Rajarata Rifles Infantry Regiment subsequent to the completion of his training. Later on, it was combined with the Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment to create a larger force, the Gajaba Regiment. Lafir was then transferred to the 1st Gajaba Regiment. He was deployed predominantly in the Northern and Eastern regions of the country at the time of the civil war. During the JVP insurrection he was deployed in the South. As Lafir was fluent in Tamil he was tasked with military intelligence operations in the East.

The Special Forces of the Sri Lanka Army of which Lafir was a founding member, specialized in rapid of deployment operations, counter-insurgency and counterterrorism warfare, reconnaissance and battle space preparation in medium and deep battle-space and jungle warfare.

The Army military base in Mullaitivu came under attack by the LTTE on 18th July 1996. A rescue operation called 'Thrivida Pahara' was then launched to support the surrounded troops with the additional deployment of troops by sea and air. The first landing took place on 18th July and was led by Colonel Lafir with a volunteer force of 275 elite commandos of the Special Forces. Amidst heavy firing, Lafir was heli-dropped and managed to establish radio communication with the besieged troops. Undeterred by multiple gunshot injuries, Lafir continued to lead his men until the moment he was killed by shrapnel early on the 19th. His body was sent back in a Sri Lanka Air Force helicopter which had landed in the battlefield with a second group of commandos.

In recognition of his bravery Lafir was promoted to the rank of Colonel posthumously and awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. Lieutenant Colonel Fazly Lafir was the highest ranking member of the Armed Forces to receive the PWV.



## 3.7 Major G S Jayanath

**O/61736**



The unit	: Unit 2, Commando Regiment
Place of death	: Mankulam
Date of birth	: 21 <sup>st</sup> January 1971
Action of Heroism	: 4 <sup>th</sup> December 1997
Age	: 27 years
Medal honoured date	: 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2004
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: M K Perera
Father	: P Edwin
Address	: 36/181, Tissa Mawatha, Quarry Road, Homagama
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama Poorna Bhumi Padakkama Desha Puthra Sammanaya

Captain G S Jayanath was a member of the Sri Lanka Army's elite Commando Regiment. Jayanath was posthumously

awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for the bravery and heroism he displayed in Operation Jayasikuru.

Operation Jayasikuru (Victory Assured) was launched by the Sri Lanka Army against the LTTE in May 1997. The core objective of this operation was to reclaim control of the main supply route to the Jaffna peninsula by connecting the towns of Kilinochchi and Vavuniya.

The battle lines had reached Mankulam by December of 1997. Jayanath was a Captain in the 2nd Commando Regiment of the Sri Lanka Army's elite 53rd division. Jayanath led one squadron sized group of Commandos to attack selected artillery positions of the LTTE in Mankulam on the 4th of December. Upon reaching the targeted area, it was realized that the artillery positions were a decoy. Jayanath's group was ambushed and came under heavy machine-gun, rocket, mortar and artillery fire.

Jayanath led a team of volunteers forward with the intention of drawing the Tiger fire towards them and allowing the remainder of his group to escape. As the group was getting closely surrounded, Jayanath ordered a defensive perimeter and transmitted a radio message requesting reinforcements. During this communication he had confidently expressed that he and his men could resist the enemy until the arrival of reinforcements.

As the battle climaxed, reinforcements could not be sent to Jayanath's team amidst the strong resistance put up by the enemy. The group had taken too many casualties by this time and Jayanath was ordered to break out with his men and withdraw. As this would mean that he would have to leave behind the injured soldiers in his group, he refused to comply with that order. Jayanath informed his commanding officer that he would not leave any of his men behind as long as they were alive and affirmed that he would hold his position as long as possible without surrendering. Jayanath fought in this spirit until he was

---

hit in the head and killed. His group was almost wiped out. The mission came to a devastating end.

Jayanath was promoted to the rank of Major posthumously and was recommended to be awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for his courage in refusing to abandon his wounded and for leading by example until he was killed. The medal was awarded to Jayanath's next-of-kin on 24th April 2001 by President Chandrika Kumaratunga.

## 3.8 Lieutenant Colonel J A L Jayasinghe

**O/64314**



The unit	: 1 <sup>st</sup> Regiment, Special Forces
Place of death	: Oddusuddan
Date of birth	: 29 <sup>th</sup> April 1976
Action of Heroism	: 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2008
Age	: 32 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: D G Sumanawathi
Father	: J A Jayasinghe
Wife	: S Kaushalya Rodrigo
Address	: 353/10, Pamihami Watte, Puwakpitiya
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Weera Wickrama Vibhushanaya Rana Wickrama Padakkama Rana Sura Padakkama Desha Puthra Sammanaya Purna Bhumi Padakkama Sri Lanka 50th Anniversary- Swarnajayanthi Medle

Major Lalith Jayasinghe served in the Sri Lanka Army as an officer in the Special Forces.

He had been twice awarded the Weera Wickrama Vibhushanaya, the second highest award for individual bravery in combat. In November, 2008 Jayasinghe was killed during a covert operation while leading a Special Forces team of eight men 40km into enemy territory.

Jayasinghe completed his school education at the Avissawella President's College and Lumbini College, Colombo. He was actively involved in school rugby and was a member of the team. Jayasinghe got married in January 2008 to Kaushalya Rodrigo and when he died in battleground, his wife was five months pregnant.

On 22nd January 1997, Jayasinghe enlisted in the Regular Force of the Sri Lanka Army as a cadet officer and subsequently underwent training at the Bangladesh Military Academy. The completion of his training was followed by being commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 6th Battalion of the Gemunu Watch. Subsequently he followed Training Course-24 and received Special Forces credentials and was assigned to the 3rd Battalion of the Special Forces.

Along with basic training in the Sri Lanka Army, Jayasinghe had undergone and taken part in various specialized training courses both locally and internationally in countries such as India, China, USA and Bangladesh. As a captain he had been hand-picked for training at Ft Benning in the USA. Within a decade from his enlistment, Jayasinghe was promoted to Captain and subsequently to Major. During this period he had served as a platoon commander, company commander and finally battalion commander.

In recognition of his service and heroism he had been honoured with Weera Wickrama Vibhushanaya (twice), Rana Wickrama Padakkama and Rana Sura Padakkama gallantry medals. He had also received the Desha Putra Sammanaya, North and East Operations Medal, Purna Bhumi Padakkama, Sri

Lanka Army 50th Anniversary Medal and 50th Independence Anniversary Commemoration Medal.

Jayasinghe's expertise in Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) operations immensely contributed to locating high-ranking Tigers and killing them or identifying their locations for air strikes. 'Colonel' Shanker, Commander of the Tiger air-wing, 'Lieutenant Colonel' Kangai Amaran, the second-in-command of the Sea Tigers and 'Colonel' Charles, the head of Tiger Military Intelligence had been killed by LRRPs. The Deputy Leader of the LTTE, Tamil Chelvam had been killed after his location was identified for an airstrike by an LRRP.

In November 2008, Jayasinghe was killed while leading a Special Forces team of eight men on a reconnaissance mission in enemy territory. Jayasinghe along with his team infiltrated 40km behind enemy lines towards Oddusuddan, an area under the control of the LTTE and sprang an ambush. While the team was moving to a second target they were noticed and attacked by LTTE forces. Jayasinghe had been taken ill on the long march, but despite his illness he led his men in a fighting withdrawal to avoid being surrounded. In the ensuing firefight Jayasinghe and another trooper were wounded and the patrol was cut off and surrounded by the Tigers. Despite being weak from illness and wounds, Jayasinghe led an assault to clear a way through enemy positions for his team. Hit in the head, Jayasinghe was killed during this confrontation, but his team managed to escape with their wounded comrades and the body of their dead CO.

Later on, a rescue operation was carried out with Mi-24 helicopter gunships of the Sri Lanka Air Force to save the Special Forces team. Jayasinghe's body was collected along with the seven surviving members of the team he fearlessly led. He was posthumously promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

On 19th May 2012, Major J.A.L. Jayasinghe was posthumously awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. The medal was awarded to Major Jayasinghe's widow, Kaushalya by President Mahinda Rajapaksa during the Victory Day parade.

## 3.9 Major K A Gamage

**O/64743**



The unit : 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Special Forces  
Place of death : Ampalavanpokkanai  
Date of birth : 17<sup>th</sup> September 1978  
Action of Heroism : 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009  
Age : 31years  
Medal honoured date : 19th May 2012  
Marital status : Married  
Mother : S A W Samarakoon  
Father : K G Marsiyan  
Wife : K A C I Karunaratne  
Address : 81/83, Major Ajith Gamage  
Mawatha, Panaluwa Watte,  
Panaluwa, Watareka, Padukka  
Awards : Parama Weera Vibhushanaya  
Rana Wickrama Padakkama  
Rana Sura Padakkama

Major K.A. Gamage received the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Award posthumously for the gallantry shown in the battlefield while serving in the Army's elite Special Forces. Before joining Special Forces he had also served in the Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment.

The Civil War in Sri Lanka intensified by mid-April of 2009. During its final stages the enemy was confined to an area of 20 square kilometers close to the Nandikadal lagoon. This area was previously declared as a No Fire Zone for civilians by the Government. Records prove that this area held over 200,000 civilians and it was surrounded by a 3km long earth bund set up by the LTTE.

An operation was launched by the 1st Battalion of the Special Forces Regiment to create a gap in the bund through which the entrapped civilians could move to government-held territory. The operation commenced on the night of 19th April 2009 from the area of Ampalavanpokkanai. One of the contingents for this operation was led by Gamage. He was ordered to capture and hold the bund and provide cover for the civilians to escape, but not to advance further.

Gamage and his men reached the bund by crossing the lagoon without being sighted by the enemy. Just before dawn, they pitched grenades over the bund and stormed the Tiger positions. They managed to overrun the Tiger bunkers and capture a section of the bund, allowing a mass of civilians to move to government controlled areas.

The civilians who were entrapped on the other side of the bund now braved the Tiger fire to wade the shallow waters of the lagoon towards Army lines through the gap the Special Forces had created. The Tigers beyond the bund kept on firing from the No Fire Zone at SF troops and civilians to stop the latter's escape. Disregarding orders, Gamage led repeated attacks against Tiger positions beyond the bund to suppress their fire. As the Tigers advanced under the cover of civilians, SF troopers had to be extremely careful to pick off Tigers without harming the civilians.



Gamage and his men were constantly exposed to enemy fire and took heavy casualties. Major Gamage led the rescue operation until he was killed by the enemy.

Over 25,000 civilians reached Government- controlled areas by 20th April and the Armed Forces managed to capture the bund. The remainder of the civilians was evacuated on the following days and subsequently, the military launched their final attack targeting the LTTE leaders. After almost three decades, the Sri Lankan Government officially declared the conclusion of the war on 19th May, 2009.

Gamage was nominated for the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya award in honour of the heroism he displayed in the battlefield on the 19th and 20th of April, 2009. On 16th May 2012, Gamage was posthumously awarded the PWV by Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa through a Gazette notification.

The Parama Weera Vibhushanaya presented to Gamage was received by his next-of-kin at the victory day celebrations on 19th May 2012 from President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Gamage was the fifth and the last recipient of this award from the Special Forces.

### 3.10 Captain U G A S Samaranayake

**O/65746**



The unit	: 9 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gemunu Watch
Place of death	: Pudukuduiruppu
Date of birth	: 31 <sup>st</sup> May 1980
Action of Heroism	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2009
Age	: 29 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	:
Father	: G A Wimalasiri
Wife	: Gayani Nandasiri
Address	: Gramodhaya Health Centre Hospital Road, Madipola Galewala
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

Udaha Gedara Amila Sampath Samaranayake was born to a closely knit family. The untimely death of his father made life rather tough for the Samaranayake family.

Right throughout his school life Samaranayake was appreciated by both teachers and students for his exemplary conduct. He completed his primary education at M/Udasgiriya Nandana Vidyalaya and his secondary education at M/G/Weera Keppetipola Maha Vidyalaya. He had to change schools as his mother's job in the health sector involved transfers. Samaranayake was commended for his equally impressive performance in academic and extracurricular activities. He was known for his remarkable and energetic personality and ability to work together with any group in the village. During his youth Samaranayake even revived a defunct sports club called 'Sugatha Sports Club' to get games like cricket and volleyball developed in his home town.

After completing his school education, Samaranayake enrolled for a computer course at a private institution and registered himself as an external undergraduate afterwards. The threat posed by the ongoing war on the peace and sovereignty of the country compelled patriotic Samaranayake to join the Forces despite his mother's objections. He joined the Sri Lanka Army as a cadet officer on 10th July 2000.

After completing his basic training from the Sri Lanka Military Academy, Samaranayake was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in December 2003. He predominantly served in the war-stricken North and East. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant to commend his service and performance in the battlefield.

Even while serving in the North and the East, Samaranayake was keen to follow courses offered in the military such as Young Officers' course, Advanced Infantry Training Course and Special Infantry Operations Course. In appreciation of Samaranayake's service and commitment, he was awarded the "Poorna Bhoomi" medal, a medal given to commend exemplary contribution to

humanitarian operations in the North and the East. Samaranayake met his life partner at a wedding ceremony of one of his fellow officers. He got married in 2008 on 14th of October.

Samaranayake played an integral role in the operation to regain the control of Pudukuduiruppu, a major stronghold of the LTTE. Amidst heavy resistance and attacks of the enemy, troops of the 9th Battalion of the Gemunu Watch together with other units succeeded in defeating LTTE troops and recapturing Pudukuduiruppu.

The battle to recapture Pudukuduiruppu was fierce and intense. Fuelled by sheer patriotism, Captain Amila Sampath Samaranayake was actively engaged in battle in the frontline inspiring his fellow soldiers.

He stayed in command leading his platoon despite serious injuries, making sure his wounded soldiers were evacuated but refusing to be evacuated himself, until he succumbed to injuries.

In recognition and appreciation of bravery displayed in the battlefield, Captain U G A S Samaranayake of the Gemunu Watch was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.11 Captain H G M K I Megawarna O/66514



The unit	: 4 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gemunu Watch
Place of death	: Pudukuduiruppu
Date of birth	: 9 <sup>th</sup> December 1984
Action of Heroism	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2009
Age	: 25 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: P A De Silva
Father	: H G M K Megawarna
Address	: Bandarahena, Yainna Road, Kahawatte
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama

Kithsiri Megawarna was born on 9th December 1984 in Kahawatta. Megawarna completed his school education at the Kahawatte Central College where he excelled in both academic and extracurricular activities. He was an active member in the

school cadet platoon, scout group and cricket team. Adored by his parents, teachers and fellow students he displayed great potential for leadership even in his childhood and was later appointed as a school prefect.

Megawarna did his G.C.E Advanced Level exams in 2005 and passed well. Young Megawarna always dreamt of joining the Sri Lanka Army to serve his country. This dream was realized when he joined the Sri Lanka Army as a cadet officer with the blessings of his parents and younger sister.

After completing his basic military training, Megawarna was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Later on he was transferred to the 9th Battalion of the Gamunu Watch as a member of which he served in the North and the East where terrorist attacks were rampant. In appreciation of the dedication and heroism he showed in the battlefield, Megawarna was awarded the Poorna Bhoomi Medal.

Megawarna was later promoted to Lieutenant. While serving in the North and the East, he completed the Young Officers' course, Advanced Infantry Training course and Special Infantry Operations course. Megawarna was known to give confidence and words of encouragement to his fellow soldiers and performed his tasks collaborating well with his seniors and subordinates.

In the ferocious battle to capture Pudukuduiruppu, young Captain Megawarna valiantly led his men by example in the frontline. He fought bravely with no regard whatsoever to his own safety.

He was seriously wounded, but stayed in command until he succumbed to injuries after making sure his wounded subordinates were evacuated. He refused to leave the battlefield.

In recognition of his gallantry, Megawarna was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

## 3.12 Sergeant H G S Bandara

**S/511904**



The unit	: 4 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment
Place of death	: Nandikadal
Date of birth	: 29 <sup>th</sup> April 1979
Action of Heroism	: 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2009
Age	: 30 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: M G Chandralatha
Father	: H N K Abeysekara
Wife	: Darshani Nayana Weragoda
Address	: Hewadiwela, Dhulmunne
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

The 30 year long civil war was nearing its conclusion by the 16th May, 2009 as the military forces were able to confine the LTTE to an area of four square kilometres around the Nandikadal lagoon. As the Sri Lanka Army moving in from north and south squeezed the Tigers into the middle of Mullivaikal spit, the Navy was blocking the shore from the east.

As the Sri Lanka Army anticipated LTTE forces to break out, they set up a blocking screen on the western side of the lagoon. They had small units of machinegun, rocket and sniper teams positioned around the lagoon. Sergeant Bandara led one of these small groups, a team of eight men of 4th Vijayabahu Infantry positioned in a small islet in Nandikadal Lagoon. They were to support the Army advance and provide an early warning system for any attempted breakout by the Tigers.

As anticipated, the breakout came on 17th dawn and Bandara's unit found itself in the path of an advancing group of 150–200 heavily armed Tigers. Sergeant Bandara instinctively gave the order to fire and his small team was able to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy who were caught in the open and taken by surprise. However, the Tigers quickly recovered and retaliated. Soon a pitched gun-battle erupted between the small ambush party and the heavily armed terrorists.

Outgunned and outnumbered, Bandara's team fought with unrestrained bravery. The eight infantrymen were all injured and some of them, including Bandara, quite severely. In spite of severe injuries he had sustained, Bandara continued to lead his team undaunted, directing their fire and motivating them in the face of overwhelming odds. Despite his wounds, he helped to move more severely wounded team members to better cover on the far side of the islet and returned every time to continue the fight, paying no attention to receive medical care himself.

The leadership of Sergeant Bandara enabled his team, through sheer bravery and tenacity, to repulse the Tiger attack and drive them back to the Mullivaikal side of the lagoon. At this



point, weak from loss of blood, Sergeant Bandara succumbed to his injuries.

Without their knowledge, the infantrymen had spoilt an attempt to get Prabakaran, his family and several high-ranking Tigers away to safety.

Sergeant Bandara sacrificed his life to bring the curse of terrorism which lasted for almost three decades to an end. A few days later, the bodies of Prabakaran and 34 high-ranking Tiger leaders were found from the lagoon and the war finally ended.

Sergeant Bandara was posthumously promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. On 19th May 2012, he was posthumously awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for exceptional bravery and heroism he showed in the battlefield.

### 3.13 Sergeant P N Suranga

**S/513841**



The unit	: 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion, Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment
Place of death	: Muhamalai – Nagarkovil
Date of birth	: 16 <sup>th</sup> December 1981
Action of Heroism	: 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2006
Age	: 25 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: N G Gunawathi
Father	: P N Dannie
Wife	: P W B K Nadeeka
Address	: 22/8, Talapitiya Cross Road, Galle
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

During the thirty-year long civil war, 11th August 2006 marks a milestone in resisting and fighting the enemy. On this day, the LTTE launched an intense attack overland and amphibiously

targeting the Muhamalai-Nagarkovil Forward Defence Line and overran that line. Corporal Suranga played an integral role in the mission to reclaim those bunkers from the hands of the enemy on the very same day.

His immense contribution as a grenadier to destroy enemy bunkers and the subsequent defence against Tiger counter-attacks was marked with precision and courage. On the 14th, the Tigers attacked again in large numbers. Corporal Suranga's Platoon was heavily engaged. Suranga used his RPG rockets very effectively until he finally ran out of 120-mm projectiles.

A Tiger machine-gun team had set up their weapon very close to Suranga's position and was directing devastating fire into Suranga's comrades. His RPG launcher useless, Suranga broke into the midst of Tiger machine-gun team with a grenade and detonated it killing them, along with himself. The destruction of the machine-gun broke the Tiger assault and allowed Suranga's comrades to survive that day.

To honor and appreciate the voluntary conspicuous act of bravery of Corporal Suranga, he was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.14 Corporal P M N Pushpakumara

**S/410053**



The unit	: 7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gemunu Watch
Place of death	: Vishvamadu A35 route
Date of birth	: 11 <sup>th</sup> January 1977
Action of Heroism	: 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2009
Age	: 32 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: P M Agnes Palansuriya
Father	: Leslie Ranasinghe
Address	: Aluth Watte, Madampe, Atakalampanna
Award	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

Nilantha Pushpakumara was born on 11th January 1977 in Ratnapura. He was the eldest in a family of four children. He completed his school education at Madampe Wijaya Maha Vidyalaya upto his GCE Ordinary Level examination. In addition

to his studies, Pushpakumara took part in many extracurricular activities.

After leaving school, Pushpakumara joined the Sri Lanka Army. He followed basic military training at the Gemunu Watch Training School in Diyathalawa.

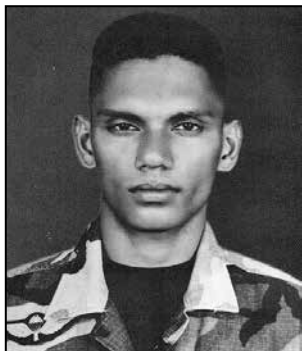
Subsequent to the completion of his military training, he was posted to the 5th Battalion of the Gemunu Watch and then transferred to the 7th Battalion. He was regarded as a committed soldier and demonstrated his skills and strength in many military operations launched against the LTTE.

In recognition and appreciation of the commitment and service during his deployment in the North and the East, Pushpakumara was awarded the Poorna Bhoomi Medal on the 50th Independence Day celebrations, presented to recognise humanitarian operations in the North and the East.

Towards the end of January 2009, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces were on the brink of gaining full control over the A35 route against the heavy resistance put up by LTTE cadres. As the troops advanced further on the A35 route, the enemy deployed various tactics to ward off Army attacks. Then the Tigers counterattacked. Corporal Pushpakumara's Battalion, the 7th Gemunu Watch was holding a part of the highway they had captured against intense enemy assault. By 1st February 2007, most of his comrades were wounded and Pushpakumara's section was unable to repulse the Tigers advancing on them. Unwilling to withdraw and leave his wounded comrades to be killed, Pushpakumara strapped a Claymore directional mine to his upper body, charged the Tigers and taking them by surprise, managed to get into the midst of them. When he detonated the mine a large number of Tigers were killed and the advance on his section halted.

In appreciation of his deliberate sacrifice of his life for his men, Pushpakumara was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.15 Sergeant D M S Chandrasiri Bandara S/462696



The unit	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Regiment, Special Forces
Place of death	: Pudukuduiruppu
Date of birth	: 10 <sup>th</sup> June 1977
Action of Heroism	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2009
Age	: 32 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: K P Katharine Silva
Father	: D M Gunapala
Wife	: R M Kumari Ranasinghe
Address	: Maihiyangana Road, Moragahakandura, 4th post, Diyakombala, Bibila
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama

Dissanayake Mudiyanseelage Sugath Chandrasiri Bandara served in the elite Special Forces of the Sri Lanka Army during

the final phase of the civil war – Eelam War IV. He received the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya, the highest military award presented in recognition of a soldier's gallantry in the battlefield for thwarting a suicide attack of the LTTE.

Chandrasiri Bandara was born and raised in Bibile in the district of Moneragala. Later on in life he got married and moved to Rathmalana with his wife and started a family there.

The Sri Lankan Army had the LTTE troops confined to a small area around Pudukuduruppu by February 2009. The LTTE launched a massive counterattack, using suicide bombers to spearhead the attack. The 2nd Special Forces units in which Chandrasiri Bandara served were sent in to stem the tide.

To launch a suicide attack, the Tigers sent in an armour-plated truck packed with explosives to punch a way through defences. A barrage of small arm fire was ineffective against the thick armour of the charging vehicle. Realising that the only way to stop the suicide vehicle was with rocket fire, Chandrasiri stepped into its path with his RPG-7 launcher. Knowing that he might not get a second shot, he let the truck get a little closer, took careful aim and fired a rocket. Though the rocket damaged the truck, it was still functional and it charged forward intent on destroying the defences. Realising the imminent threat it posed to his section and knowing well that because of the rapidly diminishing gap he wouldn't escape the explosion of its deadly cargo, without diving for cover and letting the truck pass him, he reloaded his weapon, dropped to one knee to steady himself, took careful aim and fired again. The rocket penetrated the truck's armour and the explosive-laden vehicle burst into flames with a thunderous roar. The explosion didn't spare Chandrasiri, but his sacrifice paved the way for a large group of soldiers targeted by the suicide attack to escape unharmed to safety.

Chandrasiri Bandara was promoted to the rank of Sergeant posthumously. He was recommended for the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for refusing to retreat in the face of danger and preventing the deaths of a large number of his

comrades.

Chandrasiri Bandara's next-of-kin received this award from President Mahinda Rajapaksa on 19th May 2012. Bandara was the fourth out of the Special Forces to receive this award. His name along with the names of the other recipients is engraved in a special monumental plaque at the Special Forces Brigade Headquarters in Vavuniya.



## 3.16 Corporal K Chandana

**S/467722**



The unit	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Special Forces
Place of death	: Mankulam
Date of birth	: 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 1980
Action of Heroism	: 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
Age	: 28 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: D B Dingihamy
Father	: K Podineris
Wife	: W H M Malkanthi
Address	: Watagodagedara, Baddewela, Gawarawela, Demodara
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

K. Chandana served in the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRPs) of the Sri Lanka Army's elite Special Forces. These patrols were involved in infiltrating terrorist-controlled areas during the latter part of the war. In mid-July 2008, a six-

man LRRP of which Chandana was a member, that sneaked through Tiger lines and infiltrated 30 km into enemy territory. They set up an ambush on the A9 Highway between Mankulam and Kilinochchi and killed two LTTE leaders.

After completing their mission, Chandana and his team were heading back to their duty lines when they themselves were ambushed by LTTE cadres while crossing the Mankulam-Thunukkai road. The LRRP came under heavy attack and one SF trooper was wounded. The patrol commander, Sergeant Jayakody came forward and provided covering fire for the remainder of the team to withdraw with the injured soldier. Chandana too had sustained severe injuries by this time and was even unable to move on his own. Chandana insisted that the sergeant withdraw with the team while he himself held off the Tigers, knowing certainly that to stay behind was to face certain death. With no other alternative, the others complied and Chandana continued to provide covering fire until he was killed. The remainder of the patrol was able to withdraw to safer grounds after several days, but they had to leave behind Chandana's body.

In honour of unrestrained courage and bravery shown in action, Chandana was promoted as a Corporal posthumously. He voluntarily stood up to the enemy alone, disregarding certain death to ensure the safety of his comrades. This act of heroism made Chandana worthy of receiving the highest military award, the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.17 Lance Corporal R M D M Ratnayake S/197405



The unit	: 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Light Infantry
Place of death	: Challai
Date of birth	: 29 <sup>th</sup> January 1990
Action of Heroism	: 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2009
Age	: 19 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: D M Yasawathi
Father	: R M Punchibanda
Address	: Yalagamuwa, Galpothudowa, Ambagasketiya, Lunuwatte
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

By 11th May 2009, the Sri Lanka Army had captured a series of bunds erected by the LTTE and was advancing on a two division front down the strip of land that divided the Nandikadal Lagoon from the sea. The Tigers were confined to this narrow

strip of land and they still held thousands of innocent civilians captive as a human shield against the advancing Sri Lanka Army. They were still stubbornly resisting the Army advance and brutally gunning down any civilians who tried to flee.

As a result of the 55th Division's advance down the coast through Challai, the Sea Tigers had lost many of their bases and had brought many of their lightest craft to the Nandikadal lagoon. They used these as suicide craft against soldiers advancing through the shallows of the lagoon.

On 11th May 2009, the 6th Light Infantry in which Ratnayake served, was advancing along the lagoon wading and using improvised rafts. Private Ratnayake and his comrades had advanced for around 300 metres through the shallow lagoon when they sighted Tiger suicide boats moving ahead. One of the boats turned and sped towards the infantrymen targeting them. Most of the infantrymen started to fall back trying to get to higher ground where the boat couldn't get to them, without exposing themselves to the suicide craft in the shallow water.

Instead of joining his comrades, Private Ratnayake stood his ground and opened fire on the rapidly advancing Tiger boat. Neither the suicide craft nor Ratnayake backed off and as the boat got closer to its target, it was hit many times and exploded in a ball of fire. The explosion didn't spare Ratnayake.

Ratnayake was posthumously promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal and awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for his individual act of gallantry and conspicuous bravery of the most exceptional order.

A teenager just after his initial military training, Ratnayake was the youngest to receive the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya, Sri Lanka's highest military award for bravery.

### 3.18 Corporal A M M P Abeysinghe

**S/317077**



The unit	: 8 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Light Infantry
Place of death	: Thunukkai
Date of birth	: 30 <sup>th</sup> January 1982
Action of Heroism	: 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
Age	: 26 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: R M Punchinona
Father	: A M Balaappuhamy
Address	: Ambagahapitiya, Buddama, Monaragala
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

Madushanka Priyanath Abeysinghe was born on 30th January 1982 at the Sriyagala District Hospital. He had three

brothers and one sister named Anoma who was also a soldier. He studied at Buddama Maha Vidyalyaya.

He joined the Sri Lanka Army on 7th December 2002 and received his basic training from the Army Training School, Ampara. Thereafter, he was assigned to the 8th Battalion of Sri Lanka Light Infantry.

The 8th Light Infantry, the Battalion Abeysinghe was serving, was given the task of capturing Thunukkai in July 2008. Lance Corporal Abeysinghe was a grenadier in the special assault section of his company, which was given the dangerous mission of storming heavily fortified Tiger bunkers. In the pre-dawn darkness of 25th June, Abeysinghe's section launched a surprise assault on Tiger defences and 8th Light Infantry overran the 1st line of bunkers. As specialist troops, Abeysinghe's section had to move on quickly to take the next line of Tiger defences which were alert to the attack by now. In the front position for his section, Abeysinghe spotted a group of Tiger bunkers set up immediately behind the 1st line and realizing the imminent danger that this strongpoint posed, he chose to attack immediately without waiting for the rest of his section. Firing RPG rockets, he destroyed each bunker in turn, but was severely wounded in the attempt. Not content with this feat, having spotted a second similar strongpoint, he stormed it alone still not waiting for his comrades to join him. By now, all his rockets spent, Abeysinghe broke into the strongpoint detonating handgrenades. He killed its defenders but he himself died in the explosions.

He was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya in 2012 at the Victory Day celebrations, three years after the war ended.

### **3.19 Lance Corporal A M B H G Abeyratne Banda**

#### **S/198852**



The unit	: 21 <sup>st</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment
Place of death	: Visuamadu
Date of birth	: 13 <sup>th</sup> July 1988
Action of Heroism	: 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2009
Age	: 21 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: A M Bisomanika
Father	: A M Ukkubanda
Address	: 160/5, Magoda, Madamahanuwara, Kandy
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

Abeyratne Banda had just finished the basic training course to join his Battalion and take part in the attack to capture Visuamadu. He was killed during the final phase of the war against the LTTE in 2009.

Abeyratne was assigned to the 21st Battalion of the Sinha Regiment on 1st January 2009 after successfully completing his basic military training. His Battalion was under the 584 Brigade of the 58th Division.

The central military administrative base of the LTTE in Mullaithivu was captured by the Sri Lanka Army on the 25th January 2009. The Armed Forces confined the LTTE to Pudukuduiruppu and Visuamadu areas and surrounded them. The operation was structured where the 58th division proceeded along the A35 towards Visuamadu and the task of launching an attack on Visuamadu was assigned to the 21st Sinha Rifles in which Abeyratne was deployed.

In the early hours of 29th January, 2009 the Army launched their attack. A group was sent after nightfall to take control over a section of the LTTE defensive line with the objective of destroying a major bunker of the enemy. The bunker was destroyed leaving Abeyratne injured during the operation.

Moments after the attack, Tigers counterattacked from their secondary defensive line. As the number of casualties increased, Abeyratne realized that the enemy was much more powerful than his group. He swiftly darted out of the seized enemy bunker and ran towards the adjacent bunker along a connecting furrow. Getting into the midst of LTTE cadres, Abeyratne detonated a hand grenade killing the enemy along with himself. Abeyratne's selfless act of bravery bought time for the main force of the 21st Sinha Rifles to arrive with reinforcements.

The operation concluded victoriously for the Sri Lanka Army as they succeeded in gaining control over the town of Visuamadu along with a stock of captured military hardware from the enemy.

Abeyratne Banda was posthumously promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal. He was nominated to be honoured with the highest military award presented to commend extreme acts of bravery in the battlefield for his courageous move to sacrifice his own life to destroy the enemy. On Victory Day celebrations marking the third anniversary of the end of the war, President Mahinda Rajapaksa awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya to Abeyratne's next-of-kin.



## 3.20 Lance Corporal T G R Dayananda S/319509



The unit	: 8 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Sri Lanka Light Infantry
Place of death	: Kilinochchi
Date of birth	: 6 <sup>th</sup> October 1988
Action of Heroism	: 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2008
Age	: 20 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: G D T S Chandra Gnanaguru
Father	: T G Dayananda
Address	: 662/B, Seva Janapadaya, Padavi Sri Pura
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Wickrama Padakkama

Thalahitiya Gamaralalage Darshana Ruwan Dayananda was born in 1988 on 6th October. He had three sisters and two brothers. Dayananda completed his school education at the

Palugasnuwara Maha Vidyalaya upto G.C.E Ordinary Level. He joined the Sri Lanka Army on 9th March 2007 and received his basic military training at Ranasevanapura. Upon the completion of his training he was assigned to the 8th Battalion of Sri Lanka Light Infantry.

The operation to capture the Kilinochchi Akkarayankulam terrorist supply line commenced on 16th September 2008. Dayananda was actively involved in this mission. The next day the LTTE counterattacked using mortars, cannons and heavy artillery. The tired infantrymen were close to being overrun and routed by the Tigers. Private Dayananda, a machine-gunner of his Battalion had been using his 7.62 mm PKM general-purpose machine-gun (GPMG) for hours to hold back the swarming Tigers. To buy time for his comrades who were exhausted and low on ammunition to withdraw with the wounded, he set up his GPMG and proceeded to hold off the Tigers alone laying down accurate fire. Finally, he ran out of ammunition and was overrun and killed.

In honour of this supreme act of bravery in the battlefield in the fight against terrorism, Darshana Ruwan Dayananda was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. He was the second youngest to receive the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya, the highest military award presented to honour voluntary acts of bravery in the battlefield.

## 3.21 Captain P N Punsiri

**O/66009**



The unit	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Gajaba Regiment
Place of death	: Palampiddi
Date of birth	: 27 <sup>th</sup> January 1983
Action of Heroism	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2007
Age	: 24 years
Medal honoured date	: 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: R M Dharmawathi
Father	: P G Podimahaththaya
Address	: 14/19/2, Kusum Pokuna, Divulankadawala, Medirigiriya
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhumi Padakkama

Paththinige Nuwan Punsiri was born on 27th January 1983. He received his primary education from Divulankadawala Central College, Polonnaruwa and secondary education from Medirigiriya National School. He joined the Sri Lanka Army

as a cadet officer on 5th July 2002. After passing out from the Diyatalawa Military Academy, he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and posted to the 8th Battalion of the Gajaba Regiment. He served in the operational areas of the North and the East.

On 2nd July 2007, Lt. Punsiri led a small team on a reconnaissance mission into enemy territory. After sneaking through enemy lines, they studied the Tiger territory carefully and positioned themselves in the Palampiddi area to set up an ambush. After observing the close by enemy positions, in radio contact with headquarters, he identified their locations for an artillery attack. After a successful 81 mm mortar and artillery attack, subsequent Tiger radio communications revealed that they had suffered severe casualties.

The same day, another Army reconnaissance patrol, which was positioned much beyond the Forward Defense Lines, had observed an enemy group of about 30 moving towards Lt. Punsiri's position. After being informed about them through radio, Punsiri readied his team for a sudden attack and set up an ambush covering the enemy's movement. As the Tigers reached their position, Punsiri sprang the ambush using their maximum firepower. The perplexed Tigers retreated with their dead and wounded. However, the survivors had regrouped and approaching from a different direction, launched a massive attack at the ambush party.

The intense attack continued with more Tigers joining in and the small ambush party fought back fearlessly. Many of Punsiri's team were injured and they were running low on ammunition as well. Punsiri arranged to evacuate the seriously wounded to the rear and after regrouping with the few remaining survivors, continued to engage the enemy.

Outnumbered and outgunned, he held off the enemy until he ran out of ammunition. In the end, he pulled the safety pins off the grenades he had in his possession and rushed towards the approaching enemy. Getting into their midst, he detonated the

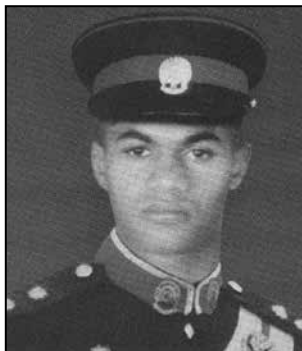
---

grenades killing a large number of Tigers and laying down his own life for the motherland.

Lieutenant P N Punsiri was posthumously promoted to the rank of Captain and honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

## 3.22 Lieutenant W D Jayathilake

**O/416581**



The unit	: 9 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gemunu Watch
Place of death	: Iranamadu
Date of birth	: 4 <sup>th</sup> November 1985
Action of Heroism	: 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2009
Age	: 24 years
Medal honoured date	: 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: K G Karunawathi
Father	: W D Nandasena
Address	: Ranaginna, Telgaha Wadiyagama, Madawela, Udukinda
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Poorna Bhoomi Medal Desha Putra Medal North and East Serving Medal Humanitration Operations Medal

Warna Durayalage Jayathilake was born in Himalegama on 4th November 1985. He was the eldest in a family of four.

He dreamt of joining the Army since childhood and realised his dream by enlisting in the Gemunu Watch on 11th May 2004 as an energetic recruit. Following in Jayathilake's footsteps his younger brother also got enlisted in the Army during the last stages of the war.

After undergoing basic training at the Recruits' Training Centre of the Gemunu Watch at Diyatalawa, Jayathilake was posted to the 5th Battalion. From day one, he displayed leadership qualities and high quality military skills. For the services he rendered to his Motherland, he had been honoured with Desha Putra Medal, Poorna Bhumi Medal, The North and East Serving Medal and Humanitarian Operations Medal. Taking into consideration his excellent performance as a ranker in the field, he was selected to be commissioned through the scheme of Other Ranks Commissioned category.

Owing to the momentum of war and circumstantial conditions, he underwent a short-term training course for officers at the Sri Lanka Infantry Training Centre, Minneriya. The course was tailor-made to improve the talents and professional skills required of an officer. After successful completion, Jayathilake was commissioned in the rank of 2nd Lieutenant and posted to the 9th Battalion of the Gemunu Watch on 3rd April 2009. He discharged his duties with much dedication and commitment setting his personal objectives aside. He was much loved and admired by his fellow officers and other ranks equally.

As a platoon commander of the 9th Gemunu Watch, Jayathilake was always in the forefront of the battle. He led by example. He exposed himself to maximum danger with scant regard for his own life and security. He always took good care of his subordinates.

However difficult the task assigned to him, he accomplished it giving the full priority to the operational aim of the mission.

Jayathilake laid down his life to defend his motherland on 20th April 2009 in the battle to capture Iranamadu, a Tiger stronghold in the Kilinochchi district.

While advancing deeper into enemy territory, the resistance was fierce every step of the way. After heavy fighting Jayathilake and his platoon were able to drive away the Tigers after killing the defenders and capturing a number of fortified bunkers. As they advanced further into enemy territory in search of more targets, they came under severe attack. A pitched battle erupted face to face with the enemy. Against the enemy's superior numbers and firepower, many of Jayathilake's team were severely injured leaving him in a critical situation. Outnumbered and outgunned, the remaining few fought bravely. In the end, to buy time to protect his comrades from further onslaught, he charged the enemy bunker and detonated a grenade killing himself and a large number of Tigers.

Jayathilake was posthumously promoted to Lieutenant. For the selfless heroism he displayed in the battlefield, he was awarded the highest recognition for gallantry, the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.



### 3.23 Staff Sergeant K G N L R Perera S/552009



The unit	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Unit, Commando Regiment
Place of death	: Pudumathalan
Date of birth	: 24 <sup>th</sup> October 1976
Action of Heroism	: 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2009
Age	: 33 years
Medal honoured date	: 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: Sumana Wasalathantri
Father	: K G Ruban Perera
Wife	: Udayangani Samarasinghe
Address	: Near Grama Niladari Office, Kirimetitenne, Balangoda
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama Desha Putra Medal

Kuru Gamage Niron Lakmal Ruwan Perera was born on 24th October 1976 in Balangoda. He was the second in a family of four. He received his primary education at the R / Kirimetitenne Vidyalaya and secondary education at the Hopwell Maha Vidyalaya, Balangoda where he passed the GCE (Ordinary Level) examination.

He joined the Commando Regiment of the Sri Lanka Army on 4th July 1996. He proved his mettle in numerous military operations in the North and the East and also as an instructor. For his exemplary service and bravery he had been awarded many medals including Rana Sura Padakkama. He had also been selected to serve in the United Nations' Peace Keeping Force in the Haiti Republic.

Perera was married and was the proud father of two pretty daughters.

During the last leg of the 30-year long civil war, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces had the Tigers confined to an area of approximately four square kilometres. The LTTE had more than 100,000 civilians entrapped within the Government declared No-Fire-Zone (NFZ) to use as a human shield against the advancing Sri Lanka Army. The actions of the Sri Lanka Government were closely monitored by the international community primarily with a focus on human rights.

This area (the NFZ) was naturally protected by the lagoon from the west and by the sea from the east. On top of combating a brutal terrorist organization, the Sri Lanka Government and the Armed Forces also had to spend a lot of time formulating strategies to rescue the hostages from the LTTE. Tigers turned this delay to their advantage and strengthened their fortifications. They made three strong defence lines by erecting earthen bunds, trenches and fortified bunkers. The area was strewn with anti-personnel mines, booby traps, Claymore mines etc. to counter the Army advance.

Under the first phase of the civilian rescue operation, A and D groups of the 2nd Battalion of the Commando Regiment were

tasked with attacking from the east and west of the earthen bund and capturing it. The G group, to which Perera was assigned, was to capture the lagoon side. After weeks of meticulous planning and preparation, troops set off on the night of April 19th. After successfully crossing the lagoon evading the death-traps laid by the enemy, they managed to position themselves by 0130 hours on the 20th. At 0200 hours on 20th April 2009, the world's largest civilian rescue mission commenced. Proving their competence and professionalism to the whole world, the Sri Lanka Army managed to rescue over 200,000 civilians from the clutches of the LTTE.

A and D groups of the 2nd Commando Regiment faced heavy resistance. Their advance was stalled by suicide attacks and ferocious heavy-gun barrage. An eight member team led by Sergeant Perera was sent to their assistance.

The team encountered fierce resistance every step of the way. Perera led the team fearlessly, encouraging them all the way. He had the least regard for his own safety, exposed himself to highest danger but was always very mindful about the safety of the rest of the team.

They stormed enemy defences one by one, overran them and left them to the infantry following in their wake for mop up operations. Their advance was halted by a strategically placed 12.7 gun spewing fire without respite. The continuous barrage of the heavy gun kept the troopers pinned to the ground. The entire offensive came to a halt. For the advance to continue, the gun had to be taken out.

Realising the importance of neutralizing the gun, Perera volunteered to spring an assault on the gun emplacement. He planned the attack carefully to the smallest detail. Four commandos were to fake an attack from the west drawing enemy fire. The other three led by Perera crept towards the emplacement inch by inch stealthily from the north, positioned themselves near the perimeter and stormed the emplacement. Taken by surprise, the perplexed defenders had no time to react and many of the

gun crew were either killed or injured. The gun fell silent and the stalled offensive recommenced.

Ordering others to stay back, Perera volunteered to search the emplacement with no regard to his own safety. During the search, Sergeant Perera was killed by a grenade detonated by an injured Tiger faking death.

Sergeant Perera was posthumously promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He was honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya for the selfless acts of heroism he performed in the battlefield.

## 3.24 Seargent K P D T Gunasekara

**S/552511**



The unit	: Unit 1, Commando Regiment
Place of death	: Pudukuduiruppu
Date of birth	: 26 <sup>th</sup> September 1976
Action of Heroism	: 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2009
Age	: 33 years
Medal honoured date	: 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: E P D Nandawathi
Father	: K P D Gunasekara
Wife	: Kumari Thilakaratne
Address	: Aluthweva, Nakkawatte
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama

Karuana Padi Durayalage Tissa Gunasekara was born on 26th September 1976 in Munamaldeniya. He was the youngest in a family of three children.

Gunasekara completed his education up to GCE (Ordinary Level) at the Ranassagala Primary School.

Gunasekara joined the Army on 30th September 1997. He received basic training at the Ampara Military Training School. After completing two rigorous courses on Commando training he was assigned to the 1st Battalion of the Commando Regiment. After joining the Army, he took part in numerous military operations in the North and the East.

Gunasekara married Pradeepa Kumari Thilakaratne in 2005 and became the proud father of a cute son named Sahan Harshamal.

During the last stages of the Wanni Humanitarian Operation, in the face of certain defeat, the Tiger leadership held many discussions with Western powers to make them intervene and not allow the Sri Lanka Army to end the war. The LTTE used strategically important locations to attack the Army and hinder their advance so that they (the LTTE) could buy time for foreign intervention.

Corporal Tissa Gunasekara laid down his life on 16th February 2009 in a special operation carried out to capture a heavily fortified Tiger stronghold in Pudukuduiruppu South. In the early battles to capture this strategically sensitive stronghold, many soldiers had sacrificed their lives and a large number had been seriously injured.

The Tigers had chosen a high ground location strategically easy to defend in every way. They had used the terrain to their maximum advantage. To stop the advance of the Army, they had dug trenches and erected many lines of heavily fortified bunkers which were easy to defend. The stronghold was designed in such a way that it could withstand even artillery fire and air strikes. The main obstacle to reach the location was the open area in front of it, which would easily expose the attacker to the defending Tigers. After all earlier attempts to capture the location failed, this virtually impossible task was assigned to the B Group of the

1st Commando Regiment which included the eight-man team led by Corporal Gunasekara.

After carefully studying the location, many possible strategies were formulated to destroy the stronghold. Reaching the location during day time and launching an attack was impossible. On the night of February 15th, many teams including Gunasekara's started crawling forward evading booby traps, minefields and enemy patrols and managed to position themselves at the appointed places. At 0545 hours Gunasekara's team sprang a surprise attack on the enemy bunkers. However, using their strategically advantageous position the Tigers launched a counterattack which kept the Commandos pinned to the ground.

As the daybreak was approaching, Gunasekara realized that if they didn't capture at least one bunker before daylight, all their lives would be in danger. He led his team crawling across the open area in front of the bunker line, through heavy enemy fire, with no regard to his own safety. They sprang an assault on a bunker and managed to capture it killing all the Tigers in it.

He was injured while voluntarily storming another bunker from which the retaliatory fire was most fierce. From the captured enemy bunker, with his team members, Gunasekara directed his fire to Tiger supporting fire units and hidden gun emplacements. This enabled the other teams to reach the enemy stronghold. After their arrival, they launched a massive attack at the enemy bunkers together with Gunasekara's team. Tigers also counterattacked relentlessly using artillery and mortar fire. Nine Commandos were killed and another eighteen were injured.

As the Tigers launched a massive attack using artillery, mortars and also snipers, getting down reinforcements to that location became impossible. As the commando fire subsided, the emboldened Tigers intensified their attack. Gunasekara, despite his injuries and with scant regard to his own safety, went forward with a light machine gun (LMG) and engaged the enemy. He held their advance until his wounded comrades were evacuated to safer locations.

Eventually, he was killed by enemy fire.

Gunasekara was posthumously promoted to the rank of Sergeant. For selfless gallantry he displayed in the battlefield and leading his men by example against overwhelming odds until death, Gunasekara was honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.



## 3.25 Corporal H A Nilantha Kumara

### S/553286



The unit	: Unit 3, Commando Regiment
Place of death	: Nilaweli
Date of birth	: 26 <sup>th</sup> November 1980
Action of Heroism	: 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2009
Age	: 29 years
Medal honoured date	: 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: W A Karuna
Father	: H A Anil Kumara
Wife	: W A Malkanthi
Address	: Maduragama, Pahala Giribawa, Galgamuwa
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Sura Padakkama Poorna Bhumi Medal

Hetti Arachchilage Nilantha Kumara was born on 26th November 1980 in Giribawa. He completed his school education

at the Pahala Giribawa Maha Vidyalaya. He captained the cricket and volleyball teams in his school. After leaving school, he joined the Commando Regiment of the Sri Lanka Army on 21st July 1999. After successfully completing initial training, he completed the more difficult Basic Commando Course No-1 and the Advanced Commando Course and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion of the Commando Regiment.

After proving his mettle in numerous military operations in the North and the East with the 2nd Battalion, Kumara was selected to undergo rigorous training on Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRPs) and then transferred to the 3rd Battalion of the Commando Regiment.

The 3rd Battalion, which specialized in Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols, played a major role in the Wanni humanitarian operations. One of their major tasks was to infiltrate enemy lines and then attack and destroy strategically important sensitive places of the enemy. The Tigers faced serious difficulties due to these attacks, which took place in the areas which they thought to be 100% secure. These attacks threatened their operations in forward defence lines and ultimately affected their whole military mechanism. The contribution made by these LRRPs was immense in defeating the Tigers in the Wanni area.

By end of January 2009, the Sri Lanka Army had captured the East and Wilpattu areas. They had confined the Tigers to a limited area around Pudukudiruppu. To break out from this situation, the Tigers needed the Sri Lanka Army to deploy their troops elsewhere and loosen their grip.

The LTTE leadership had dispatched many Tiger groups to other areas of the country. They had been ordered to kill as many innocent civilians as possible and create unrest in the rest of the country, so that the Army would be forced to withdraw troops surrounding Tigers and deploy them elsewhere. The Sri Lanka Army had to detect, isolate and destroy such groups. Since they were spread over a vast area and evading the Army, this was no easy task.

Such an operation was launched on 27th January 2009 led by Lt. J C R Jayasuriya. Lance Corporal Nilantha Kumara was an active member of this team. Avoiding civilian habitats and trekking through difficult terrain, the team arrived at their destination in Nilaweli. After detecting the enemy's location in a thorough search, they observed and studied the enemy closely before planning the assault. The LRRP unit observed that there was a large number of Tigers and they were in possession of a General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG). Realising the threat this weapon posed to their small group, the leader decided that destroying this gun was imperative to the success of the mission. A clever, skillful and reliable soldier was required for this difficult task and Nilantha Kumara volunteered.

When the assault started, Nilantha Kumara didn't deter from his objective. Braving enemy fire and without any regard for his own safety, he charged at the Tigers with the GPMG and killed them neutralizing the gun. Shot many times during his charge, Nilantha Kumara also laid down his life to make their mission a success.

Nilantha Kumara was posthumously promoted to the rank of Corporal. For his voluntary act of bravery of the most exceptional order, he was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.26 Corporal S V A M Pushpamal

**S/ 554572**



The Unit	: Unit 1, Commando Regiment
Place of Death	: Pudumathalan
Date of Birth	: 25 <sup>th</sup> April 1987
Action of Heroism	: 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2009
Age	: 22 years
Marital Status	: Bachelor
Mother	: K V Amarawathie Manike
Father	: S V G Wijerathna
Address	: 35, Samansirigama, Minneriya
Awards received	: Parama Weera Vibhushana : Poornabhoomi Padakkama

Corporal Pushpamal sacrificed his life for the motherland on 21st April 2009 amidst a mission to rescue a group of civilians.

Sela Vidana Arachchilage Manoj Pushpamal who was born on 25th April 1987 in Hingurakgoda received his primary education from Kiriwetiya Primary School. He received his secondary education at Girithale Maha Vidyalaya and got through the G C E ordinary level examination.

Pushpamal who joined Commando Regiment of the Sri Lanka Army on 11th January 2007 successfully completed the 58th Course programme and subsequently, the 39th higher Course programme at Uva Kudaoya Training College.

He made his mark in contributing to the teams engaged in capturing several enemy controlled areas in the Northern theatre of war. In recognition of the excellence and the diligence displayed in carrying out his duties, he was awarded the Poornabhoomi Padakkama and was promoted to the rank of a Lance Corporal.

On the 21st April 2009, he was engaged in a mission, with his co-team, in rescuing a number of civilians used by the LTTE as a human shield, preventing attacks by the army.

The army, as a precautionary measure to avoid civilian casualties, decided to refrain from using heavy weapons like the shells. Terrorists accompanied by their leaders were confined to a tiny piece of land that was fortified with massive bunds made of soil, arduous trenches, and land mines. The area had a natural cover of the sea adjacent to Mullativu from the east and a 600-metre-long bay area from the west.

The team which was very well briefed of the future plans and the strategy, commenced their operations by the fall of the night. The initial task in Pudumathalan was to destroy the array of bunkers that were lined-up along the bund made of soil. It was however, a huge and a hazardous challenge to cross the 600-metre bay. They avoided the land route and ventured to get into the neck-deep water and reached the targeted land under the cover of the thick darkness. They were not deterred by the anti-personnel mines that were laid by the enemy to trap them.

Later, they were formed into groups of four each and took their positions to capture the bunkers. If they were to succeed in rescuing the thousands of civilians, it was essential for them to cut-open the bund made up of soil. The LTTE however, had fortified the area with heavy weaponry, the bunkers built in every 20 -25 metres and with anti-personnel mines and Claymore

mines.

As planned, Pushpamal's team launched the attack at the first light. Terrorists too carried out severe counter attacks lengthening the encounter for several hours. As a result, it was near impossible to make any head-way in the fight. Though the commanding officer, via radio signals, ordered them to retreat, Pushpamal and the team continued to attack amidst the on-coming terrorist shells.

By the dawn next day, Pushpamal's team was successful in creating the opportunity to rescue the lives of thousands of innocent civilians by break-opening the bund made of soil. Pushpamal sacrificed his life during this encounter.

He too was a heroic son of Sri Lanka who was awarded the Parama Weera Wibhushanaya for the act of bravery.

## 3.27 Major W M S B Walisundera

**O/ 64556**



The Unit	: 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Gajaba Regiment
Place of Death	: Nagarkovil
Date of Birth	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 1977
Action of Heroism	: 11 <sup>th</sup> August 2006
Age	: 29 years
Marital Status	: Bachelor
Mother	: Pathmini Kumarihamy
Father	: Nimal Bandara Walisundera
Address	: 52/2, Talmaduwatte, Kundasale
Awards received	: Parama Weera Vibhushana Ranasura Padakkama Poornabhoomi Padakkama Uthuru Nagenahira Sangramika Padakkama Panasweni Nidahas Swarnajayanthi Padakkama Desha Puthra Padakkama

Walisundera Mudiyanse Indika Saminda Bandara was born in Thalathuoya on 3rd July 1977. His mother, Pathmini Kumarihami Illegama is a Graduate Teacher. Father, Walisundera Mudiyanse Nimal Bandara Walisundara is a Prison Officer. Saminda had a sister younger to him.

Saminda studied at Dharmaraja College Kandy and received his religious education at Sumana religious school in Galmaduwa Rajamaha Viharaya.

He was a bright student at Dharmaraja College and was a member of the school cadet team.

He joined Sri Lanka Army as a Cadet Officer on 1st December 1997 and received his primary training at War Academy of Bangladesh. He completed his cadet officer course and was enlisted to the Gajaba Regiment as a Commissioned Officer in the rank of Second Lieutenant on 19th July 1999.

Lieutenant Saminda Walisundara who took part in Ranagosa 111 and 1V (1998-1999) and made a brilliant contribution during Elam War 3. In recognition of the contribution he made in this operation, he received the Ranasoora Padakkama, 50th Independence Golden Jubilee Padakkama, Poornabhumi Padakkama, North East War Padakkama, and Deshaputhra Padakkama.

On 11th August 2006, during the 4th Eelam War (the Last War) the enemy forces launched a massive and a surprise onslaught and captured a good number of bunkers in Eduthummaduwal in Jaffna Peninsula where the front line was guarded by the 4th Battalion of Gajaba Regiment.

The bunkers that were captured by the enemy forces were situated in a very decisive strategic location, in terms of conducting the war. Had this strategically situated location been lost, it could have led to the isolation of Nagarkovil due to the possibility of blocking the supply route between Eluthummaduwal and Nagarkovil. At the same time, the location of the 36th bunker was at a very crucial strategic point, in terms of conducting the



war. Captain Walisundare therefore, volunteered to prevent the capture of the 36th bunker by the enemy.

Using radio signals, the “C” team, with the Captaincy of Walisundare was sent to the location with the purpose of augmenting the second defence line of the Gajaba Regiment. By this time, the enemy had captured the entire array of bunkers in the front line, including the bunker number 36.

Amidst the heavy onslaught of fire, Captain Walisundare was successful in maintaining the level of highest morale of the team and was able to line-up and deploy the soldiers against the enemy. He put his ever-best efforts and endeavoured to initiate counter attacks disabling the enemy.

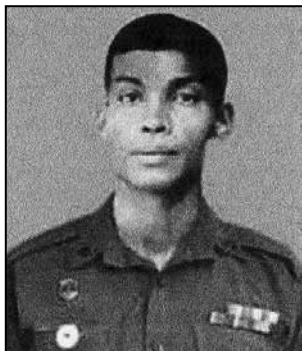
With the assistance of untiring efforts of a small team of soldiers he commanded, Captain Walisundare who volunteered to re-claim the 36th bunker, was carefully proceeding towards the target. A team of enemies who were hiding behind a sand dune directed an onslaught of fire against Walisundare’s team. Swiftly changing his strategy, Captain Walisundare armed with his personal weapon and hand grenades commenced marching forward amidst the imminent threat posed to the safety of his precious life. In a moment, he jumped into the 36th bunker with the two grenades in his hands.

He destroyed six of the enemies manning the bunker and made the supreme sacrifice with his life, for the sake of his team and the motherland.

As a mark of respect for the valour and the heroism vividly displayed by this war hero he was recommended for the promotion to the rank of Major, posthumously, and was awarded with the honour of Parama Weera Vibhushana the highest honour that could be awarded to a war hero.

### 3.28 Sergeant A M Anura

**S/ 371780**



The Unit	: 7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion 57th Special Attack Force Sri Lanka Singha Regiment
Place of Death	: Periampane
Date of Birth	: 30 <sup>th</sup> October 1968
Action of Heroism	: 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2007
Age	: 39 years
Marital Status	: Married
Mother	: Don Wicremasinghe Premawathie
Father	: Abesiri Munasinghe
Wife	: T M Vijayalatha
Address	: Habarana Road, Nawakkulama, Maradankadawala
Awards received	: Parama Weera Vibhushana Ranasura Padakkama Negenehira Manusheeya Padakkama Uthuru Manusheeya Padakkama Poornabhoomi Padakkama Uthuru Nagenahira Sangramika Padakkama Panasweni Nidahas Swarnajayanthi Padakkama

Abesiri Munasinghe Anura was born on 30th October 1968 in Medawalakada Rural hospital. He was from Kamburupitiya Matara. His mother is Don Wickremesinghe Premawathie. Father is Abesiri Munasinghe. Anura had an elder sister, Disna Ranjani.

He studied at Sri Indasara Maha Vidyalaya and was good at studies as well as sports.

He joined the Sri Lanka Army on 25th September 1996 as a trainee soldier and received his basic war-fare training at the Army War Mechanical Battalion.

He was enlisted to the 8th Battalion of the Singha Regiment on 6th July 1997 and subsequently promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal and later, Corporal.

In recognition of his gallantry performance in theatre of war, he was awarded the Ranasura Padakkama Nagenahira Manusheeya Padakkama and 50th Anniversary Indipendence Padakkama

LTTE who broke the Ceasefire Agreement in 2006 launched the 4th Elam war by closing the sluice gates in Mawil Aru. By then, Anura was affiliated to the 7th Battalion of Sri Lanka Singha Regiment.

With a view to strengthen the writ of the army over the Periyampanei, the army deployed three small teams of four individuals to the area. By this time, Anura had been promoted to the Rank of a Sergeant. With the aim of carrying out a mission of reconnaissance, on 10th September 2007, he ventured away from the defence perimeter.

Anura and the team as foot soldiers, did not have the ground support of the engineering soldiers to do the reconnaissance of this densely mined and highly fortified zone. They however, amidst the raining shells, managed to accomplish the task of gathering the required information over the enemy area, the surroundings and to return to the base unharmed.

Anura who gathered the required intelligence, meticulously designed the plans necessary for the ensuing attack and ventured out the next morning with the other soldiers who accompanied him in the reconnaissance.

They had to clear the land mines and the deadly traps laid by the LTTE in reaching the targeted destination, amidst heavy resistance from the enemy.

Unfortunately, he was the target of an enemy bullet, while bravely leading his team from the front to accomplish the task of capturing the enemy trench. Despite being wounded, he wanted to maintain the moral and the courage of the accompanying soldiers. He wanted to signal to them that the targeted objective had to be accomplished at whatever cost. He courageously got up and marched forward. He took two bombs, activated them and jumped into the enemy trench killing himself and five of the remaining enemies.

Sergeant Anura was awarded the highest honour of Parama Weera Vibhushana an award that could be won only once in a life time, in recognition of the valour exhibited in safeguarding the lives of the accompanying soldiers and the dedication to the duty of achieving team objectives even at the sacrifice of one's own life.

## 3.29 Lance Corporal K G M Rajapakse

### S/ 362939



The Unit	: 12 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, 57th Special Attack, Sri Lanka Singha Regiment
Place of Death	: Adampan
Date of Birth	: 4 <sup>th</sup> June 1989
Action of Heroism	: 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2008
Age	: 19 years
Marital Status	: Bachelor
Mother	: Siriyawathie
Father	: Bodhidasa Rajapakse
Address	: 119/1, Waradangolla, Hasalaka
Awards received	: Parama Weera Vibhushana

Kalabatuwawe Gedara Mahinda Rajapakse, the second war-hero to receive Parama Weera Vibhushana award in his nineteen's was born on 4th June 1989 in the village called Waradangolla. His mother was Rajapaksegedara Siriyawathie. Father was Kalabatuwawegedera Bodhidasa. He had elder brothers as well as brothers younger to him.

He studied at Dilhara Vidyalaya in Mahiyangana and had to cut short the process of education half-way due to the demise of his father at his young age and the decision of his elder brother to ordain as a Buddhist monk. As a result, he was compelled to shoulder a greater share of the family responsibilities and to engage in manual labour even during his young school days and to supplement their day to day family expenses. As he completed eighteen years of age, he joined the Sri Lanka Army as a trainee soldier and received his basic soldier training at the Sri Lanka Army training school at Thisawewa. Subsequently, he was enlisted to the 12th Battalion of the Sinha Regiment.

This was the time when the 12th Battalion of Sinha Regiment was victorious in encounters and engaged in humanitarian work in Viswamadu in Kilinochchi.

That was also the time when Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRP), a very successful combat strategy, was widely used by the Sri Lanka Army. LRRP is a very effective strategy, detached from the traditional way of conducting war-fare by foot soldiers. LRRP deploys small groups of highly trained combat soldiers to accomplish a given task. By that time, Mahinda, a member of a small team had become a fully fledged soldier who had mastered the art of war

12th Battalion of Singha Regiment was tasked by the high command on 16th October 2008 to attack and over-run an array of enemy bunkers that were lined up adjacent to a massive barrier trench and a bund made of soil. Mahinda's team had been included in the group detailed for the purpose and they were proceeding to accomplish the task. However, at one time, the fire power of the enemy forces were overwhelming and Mahinda's group had to tactfully retreat, of course, strategically. Later, an order was received from the high command on 22nd December 2008 to re-commence action that was abandoned previously and to over-run the bunkers.

As the fire power of the enemy was overwhelming, it was a case of waiting for an opportune moment. The uneasy situation

created impatience in Mahinda's mind and was developing a state in his mind, urging for action. Suddenly, without any instructions from the superiors or the knowledge of any one in his group he got up and started firing RPGs and managed to destroy the main enemy bunker. Next, he entered the enemy bunker and killed the four remaining enemies. He re-filled the RPG and destroyed the two adjacent bunkers. By this time, he did not have the required fire power to destroy the remaining fourth bunker. Undeterred Mahinda, marched forward with only two grenades in his hand. It was really unfortunate that he encountered an enemy fire and was gun down by the enemy. He was wounded with deadly injuries and his companions carried the body to the bunker.

He was awarded with the highest honour of Parama Weera Vibhushana for the gallantry exhibited by him in sacrificing his life, safeguarding the lives of the other co-fighters and the immense sacrifice and contribution he made in achieving the prime objectives of the Army.

History is full of evidence to support the fact that the honesty, and the selflessness in a youngster is very much greater than that of a grown-up. It is the common belief of the majority that the patriotism and the humbleness of a village lad is much greater than that of a boy grown-up in an urban environment. Nineteen-year soldier Ratnayake who sacrificed his life in Chalai as well as the Lance Corporal Mahinda who was also in his nine-teens who sacrificed his life in Adampan for the sake of the unity of the motherland are from the average families with rural backgrounds. They exhibit nothing but the common denominator of valour, bravery and heroism.

## Sri Lanka Navy

### 3.30 Lieutenant J L D S Wijethunga

**Officier No: NRX 0517**



Branch	: Executive
Batch	: KDA-05
Place of death	: Chalai
Date of birth	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 1967
Action of Heroism	: 30 <sup>th</sup> March 1996
Age	: 29 years
Medal honored date	: 1996
Marital status	: Single
Mother	: W A D Isabel
Father	: N S D S Wijethunga
Address	: 435, Sunil Batapola Road, Elpitiya
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

Jude Lakmal De Silva Wijethunge served as a Lieutenant in the Sri Lanka Navy. He commanded the Dvora fast attack craft P458 of the 4th Fast Attack Flotilla.



On 30th March 1996, a Sri Lanka Navy convoy was sailing south. The convoy consisted of a Navy transport carrying a large number of troops home on leave, escorted by Dvora fast attack craft P331, P491 and P458 of the 4th Fast Attack Flotilla. The P458 commanded by Lt Jude Wijetunga was under tow as it was placed at a semi-operational level due to damages it had suffered to its engines in a previous engagement.

On the same day at 1200hrs, the main vessel SLNS Ranavijaya detected some suspicious echoes moving fast towards the convoy from a location 10 NM North-East of Chalai. The escort units and units on patrol in the area proceeded to investigate and intercept the enemy craft.

Despite the counter measures taken by the SLN, LTTE boats were able to penetrate towards MV Ngaroma, the troop carrier. The collective attacks launched by P331 and P491 managed to destroy the first wave of enemy craft. Another wave of four LTTE craft were heading towards MV Ngaroma, away from P331. Observing this movement, Lieutenant Wijethunge ordered his tow line dropped and sped towards the Tiger suicide craft which were targeting the troop carrier.

The P458 successfully engaged and destroyed two LTTE craft. It was not able to intercept the third craft which rammed into it. The suicide boat exploded destroying the Dvora along with it.

The decision to risk his own unit and men on board to save a much larger number of personnel on board MV Ngaroma was highly commended. The P458 sank and only one sailor named Pathmakumara survived.

The voluntary act of bravery of Lieutenant Wijetunga to engage four craft of the LTTE, despite his own limitations in terms of mobility, machinery and firepower demonstrated the true Navy spirit.

For this conspicuous act of bravery, Lieutenant Wijetunga was nominated for the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. He was posthumously promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Commander. Wijethunga was the first naval officer to be honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya.

### 3.31 Chief Petty Officer K G Shantha

**Service No: XX 31243**



Branch	: Special Boat Squadron
Batch	: 91
Place of death	: Nagarkovil
Date of birth	: 4 <sup>th</sup> August 1979
Action of Heroism	: 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2008
Age	: 29 years
Medal honoured date:	: 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2009
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: R M Dolynona
Father	: K G Gunathilake
Wife	: R M S R Dissanayake
Address	: 266/A, Norwood Upper Division, Norwood, Hatton
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya

A battle between the Sea Tigers and the Sri Lanka Navy erupted off the coast between Point Pedro and Nagarkovil at dawn on 1st November 2008 around 5.45 a.m. Shantha Gamage

was a Petty Officer at the time in the Navy's elite Special Boat Squadron (SBS). Shantha was in command of an Arrow-class patrol boat Z-142. This craft was armed with a 23mm auto cannon and two machine guns. The Z-142 was engaged in the aforementioned battle.

Along with his crew in the Z-142, Shantha engaged the Sea Tiger vessels. The high manoeuvrability of this vessel was a huge advantage to this naval team. As the fight intensified, all three gunners of the naval vessel were either killed or wounded. LTTE boats proceeded towards the larger Navy vessels. With his gunners down, Shantha was left incapable of attacking the enemy. Shantha sighted a Sea Tiger suicide boat moving towards the P-164, a Colombo-class larger fast attack craft of the 4th Fast Attack Flotilla. He was aware that the P-164 was carrying a crew of twelve. Knowing the only weapon left to him was his boat itself, Shantha manoeuvred the Z-142 into the path of the suicide boat and crashed headlong into it. The collision ended up in a fiery explosion. Shantha was killed in this blast and the suicide boat along with the Z-142 were destroyed by it. As Shantha intended, he was able to save the lives of the crew of P-164.

Both the enemy and Sri Lanka Navy claimed victory at the end of this battle, hence the outcome of it remains blurred and vague. The Sea Tigers claimed that their operation succeeded in sinking two Navy vessels and prompted them to withdraw. The Sri Lanka Navy claimed that they destroyed at least four Sea Tiger vessels with the support rendered by the Sri Lanka Air Force.

Shantha was posthumously promoted to the rank of Chief Petty Officer. A house constructed by the Naval Engineering Division and funded by the First Lady at the time, Mrs. Shiranthi Rajapaksa was donated to his family on 16th December 2011.

In honour of Shantha's selfless act of bravery to safeguard his fellow sailors by sacrificing his own life, he was awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya on 19th May 2012 by President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the third anniversary celebrations marking the end of war.

Shantha was the second out of the Sri Lanka Navy to be awarded the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya after Lieutenant Commander Jude Wijethunge who was honoured with it posthumously in 1996.

## Sri Lanka Air Force

### 3.32 Wing Commander T D S Silvapulle

**Officer No: 01502**



Unit	: 9 <sup>th</sup> Attack Helicopter Squadron
Place of death	: Thamilamadam
Date of birth	: 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 1966
Action of Heroism	: 19 <sup>th</sup> December 1999
Age	: 33 years
Medal honoured date	: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Marital status	: Married
Mother	: K P S Fernando
Father	: J R Silvapulle
Wife	: K N M Shamali Silvapulle
Address	: 71-99, St Judes Road Kalagedihena, Kadol Kelle Negombo
Awards	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya Rana Wickrama Padakkama Rana Sura Padakkama

A product of St. Joseph's College, Colombo, Squadron Leader Tyron Silvapulle was a distinguished helicopter pilot of the Sri Lanka Air Force.

He was killed in active duty in the North. At the time of his death, his wife was expecting a child. Silvapulle is the only recipient of the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya from the Sri Lanka Air Force.

In 1986, on 18th of May, Tyron Silvapulle joined the Sri Lanka Air Force at the 16th Pilot intake. He served in the North and East regions during the war. Silvapulle flew Bell 212 and Mi-17 transport helicopters as a general duties pilot. Subsequently he was assigned to the 9th Attack Helicopter Squadron to fly Mi-24 gunships.

The Forward Defence Line of Sri Lanka Army at Thamilamadam, close to Elephant Pass came under attack from a flotilla of LTTE boats on 19th December 1999. The Air Force dispatched two Mi24 gunships to give assistance to the Army troops defending the line. Silvapulle led the formation piloting his Mi-24 helicopter CH 618. Having promptly analyzed the threat by the enemy boats to Sri Lanka Army, the threat posed to his helicopter by the enemy's capability to attack with surface to air missiles and the adverse weather conditions, Silvapulle ordered the wingman to remain away from danger zone and proceeded to attack the enemy. Unable to sustain the firepower of Silvapulle's relentless and daring attack the enemy boats were seen fleeing from the area. Not content with letting them escape to fight another day, Silvapulle pursued the retreating LTTE boats and attacked them relentlessly. During the attack Silvapulle's helicopter was hit with a projectile which is suspected to have been an anti-aircraft missile fired from the escaping boats or the nearby shore.

The aircraft crashed into the Vettalaikerni Lagoon. Silvapulle along with his co-pilot and two gunners died in this crash. A joint operation carried out by the Air Force and the Army succeeded in recovering their bodies and some vital components of the

gunship. This was the second time an Mi-24 was destroyed by a terrorist attack.

Silvapulle was posthumously promoted to the rank of Wing Commander and was nominated for the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya. Silvapulle had already been awarded the Rana Wickrama Medal and the Rana Sura Medal which are the fourth and fifth highest military awards respectively.

The decision to pursue and attack the enemy, knowing the threat posed by surface to air missiles and the risk to his own life showed the unwavering valour and courage of this pilot. Wing Commander T D S Silvapulle was honoured with the Parama Weera Vibhushanaya by President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the celebrations marking the third anniversary of the end of the war on 19th May, 2012. The medal was accepted by his next-of-kin





## Section-4

### The Overall Analysis and the Conclusion

#### 4.1 Overall Analysis

Once, a little boy approached a World War II veteran at a victory parade and asked him a question: “How does it feel to be a war hero?” The veteran simply smiled and said: “I am just a survivor, son. We buried all the heroes.”

War is harsh. War is brutal. War is painful. Even amidst the brutality of war, humanity shines through in the form of heroic soldiers who would not hesitate for a moment to give up their own lives so that the lives of others could be saved and protected. That determination is what makes a hero. A hero does not think about himself. A hero is selfless and courageous beyond belief.

During the three decades of war in Sri Lanka, many heroes emerged from the battlefields of the North and the East. These are men thanks to whose bravery we can breathe freely today. But out of those heroes, there are 32 men whose acts of gallantry stand out. It is their story that we have told in this book. Their selfless acts of courage will stand the test of time. They all made the Supreme Sacrifice, but they will remain immortal in our hearts and minds. Many generations from now, their valour will still be admired.

The Parama Weera Vibhushanaya, Sri Lanka’s highest military award for bravery, has been awarded to 32 individuals from all three Armed Forces to recognize the supreme acts of heroism they had committed in combat in the three decades of war. The PWV is equivalent to the British Victoria Cross and the American Medal of Honour.

All 32 recipients were ordinary men though their deeds reflected utmost bravery. They were not in command of armies or naval fleets. In fact, only 13 of them were officers and the remaining nineteen were other ranks. Twenty-nine were from the Army, two were from the Navy and one was an airman. Not a single recipient survived to enjoy the honour and recognition the medal would have brought him. According to military code, even the Chief of Defence Staff, the highest ranking military officer of the land, is required to salute a wearer of the PWV with no regard to rank.

None of them performed these supreme acts of courage against overwhelming odds at the behest of somebody or as a part of a whole. In the face of certain death, each decided alone the course of action he would take, stepped forward to act upon that and laid down his life. Some died taking the fight to the enemy and a similar number died in desperate rearguard actions to enable comrades to retreat to safety.

Although the PWV was established in 1981, it first three were awarded during Eelam War II 1990- 1993. The Third Eelam War commenced due to the violation of CFA and was during 1995-2002 which saw the PWV Medal awarded to 6 soldiers. The fact that it had been awarded 23 times during the last two years of the war, gives an idea about the ferocity of combat and the sacrifices that needed to be made to defeat the Tigers completely.

It is also possible that some heroic deeds, which took place during military debacles where whole camps were overrun, would not have been either noticed or documented. Where whole platoons had been wiped out, no one would have survived to tell others the selfless acts of bravery that took place.

All thirty-two PWV medalists were men and with a few exceptions young. The oldest among them, Colonel A F Lafir was a much decorated 39-year old veteran, but the youngest, Private RMDM Ratnayake was a mere teenager barely out of basic military training. Eleven medalists were less than 25 years old, ten were in the age group of 26-30 and another nine 31-35.

Only 16 were married. Around 24 were from remote villages and low-income families.

As in all wars throughout our history and elsewhere in the world, it is mostly the under-privileged that join the military due to sheer patriotism, fight selflessly, commit impossible acts of bravery and lay down their lives. The wars they win do not alter their station in life or way of life, despite their sacrifices. Most of their acts of heroism don't get noticed or documented and people tend to forget all about them after a short while.

The Tigers didn't fight a conventional war. They fought a guerilla war with no rules. They conscripted under-privileged Tamil youth, brainwashed and trained them and as a result, had an endless supply of cadres including females, children and especially suicide cadres at their disposal. Being a conventional military force, the Sri Lanka Army finally had to change their tactics to fight the Tigers. Defeating them would have been impossible if we also did not have in our midst soldiers in the calibre of these 32 PWV heroes, who were ready to lay down their lives for the motherland.

## 4.2 Conclusion

Sri Lanka as a nation has had many bitter experiences of being conquered by many foreign invaders and also, from its colonialized history. They had destroyed our self-sufficient agriculture-based economy and also our cultural values. The resources of our country had been plundered by the conquerors and as a result, majority of the population had lost their inherited properties.

However, in the present context, powerful nations have become more civilized and traditional colonialism and conquests have come to an end. But this trend has resurfaced as attempts at regime change in certain developing countries through highly trained militant groups. Some militant groups have had the privilege of getting recognized as freedom fighters by the

Western public and they are supported by powerful nations with the intention of threatening the sovereignty of certain developing countries. This could be interpreted as the modern trend in colonization. These terrorist groups are involved in brutal destructive activities such as killing innocent people, assassinating political leaders, destroying economically sensitive places etc. to disturb the civil society with their so-called demand to a separate state. Further, these conflicts create a gateway for global political powers to penetrate these countries and grab their valuable natural resources. It is also a market for them to sell their weapons.

Conflicts among different ethnicities are common in any country, but they are aggravated by political leaders for their personal gains. They cause never ending mistrust among races when it comes to resource sharing. These racial conflicts could end up in violence and result in endless suffering of innocent people. In the present context, we have observed that interference by developed nations has not resolved any racial conflicts in developing countries. Further, the military intervention of powerful nations has not been able to settle political unrest in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Egypt. Moreover, the living standards of innocent people have further deteriorated after the ouster of so-called dictator regimes. Even in Sri Lanka, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) could not control LTTE militant activities. Therefore, to minimize such conflicts, it is very important that all ethnic groups understand the cultures and values of others, respect each other and build a multicultural harmonious society.

In Sri Lanka, conflicts between Tamils and Sinhalese had existed for many centuries. Similar to India, when Sri Lanka was a colony, racial hatred was nurtured by the British to their advantage and after independence, gradually aggravated by local politicians. Historical evidence shows the existence of separatist Tamil militant activities even as far back in 1970, such as the killing of Alfred Duraipappa, the Jaffna Mayor. But they were small in number and the militants did not have the required

military training and access to modern weapons.

The 1983 ethnic riots were a historical landmark in racial conflicts in Sri Lanka. It generated a lot of adverse publicity about the majority Sinhalese in international media. This created a breeding ground for militant groups such as the LTTE. As a result, under-privileged innocent youth, without knowing the nitty-gritty of the issue were motivated to become terrorists against their own country and also, their own people.

The Sri Lankan Government first declared war against Tamil militant groups in the early 1980s. Every time they were weakened and about to be defeated, Tigers brought on international pressure and the Government had to agree to a ceasefire and start peace negotiations. Tigers would use the respite to acquire advanced weapons, strengthen their positions, violate the ceasefire agreement with impunity and when their position once again became strong, start hostilities again giving some flimsy excuse without warning. The war continued for 30 years in this manner.

By the end of the 2nd Cease-Fire-Agreement the Tigers had become much more powerful and had access to more advanced military weapons than the Government Forces. They were able to train large numbers of guerrilla fighters, suicide cadres and child soldiers and by using them they assassinated political leaders, massacred Sinhalese and Muslim villagers and attacked sensitive economic targets of the country.

The panel appointed by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon described the Tigers as “the most disciplined fighting force in the world”. But in reality, they had proved to be the most brutal and ruthless terrorist organization in the world. Therefore, it became an almost impossible task for the government and its military to fight and defeat the Tigers and in fact, there were many foreign military experts who declared that they could never be defeated.

To overcome this situation and defeat the Tigers, the

Sri Lankan Government stood firm and provided the correct political leadership to the very end. The military leadership adopted correct military strategies, strengthened their positions by purchasing state-of-the-art weapons and recruiting and training military personnel. The mindset was changed from top to bottom, to engage the Tigers under all circumstances without fear, with the belief that they could be defeated. Once the Fourth Eelam War started, without giving in to international pressure, the Government did not move from its position until the Tigers were completely defeated militarily.

With numerous other war heroes who laid down their lives, these 32 PWV heroes became icons to the nation because of their selfless deeds of heroism to safeguard our motherland. Their names should be engraved in Sri Lankan history and we, who enjoy the freedom and comforts brought forth with their sacrifices, and future generations must forever be grateful to them.

Now that the Civil War which plagued this country for nearly three decades is finally over, all concerned parties must get together and work towards lasting peace and reconciliation to ensure that our country would be free of all future wars. It would really be a great achievement if there will be no more wars in the future and hence, no need to award even one more Parama Weera Vibhushanaya medal.



From boys to guerrillas

## Section-5

### Additional Information, Annexes and References

#### 5.1 Tamil Militant Groups

**TELO: The Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization** is an organization that campaigned for the establishment of an independent Tamil Eelam in the northeast of Sri Lanka. The TELO evolved out of the group of Tamil student radicals formed by Nadarajah Thangathurai and Selvarajah Yogachandran (Kuttimani) in the late 1960s. The group formally constituted itself into an organization in 1979, inspired in part by the LTTE and the EROS. Soon, it had become the most effective of Tamil militant group except for the LTTE.

Its success did not last long; both its leaders were captured by the Sri Lankan Army in 1981. The TELO was originally

founded as a militant group, and functioned as such until 1986, when most of the membership was killed in a conflict with the LTTE. Its surviving members got themselves recognized as a political party, and continue to function as such today.

The TELO currently has two Members of Parliament. It is a part of the Tamil National Alliance, a coalition of Tamil parties which won 2.9% of the popular vote and 14 out of 225 seats at the 2010 parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka.

**PLOTE: People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam** was formed in 1980 by ex-surveyor Uma Maheswaran alias Mukundan, who became its general secretary. He was the chairman of the LTTE from 1977-1980. He was trained in Lebanon and later in Syria under the Palestine nationalist organization and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. After a bitter rivalry with Velupillai Prabhakaran, Uma Maheswaran left the LTTE in 1980 and formed the PLOTE.

PLOTE was active in cultivating international connections; it established links with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine under George Habash, the Tunisian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Algeria, the Turkish Organization for Solidarity with Palestine, the African National Congress, Communist Party of Cuba, etc. These links were later picked up by the LTTE.

PLOTE lost its strength and momentum gradually due to continual conflicts with the LTTE. On the 16th July 1989, Uma Maheswaran was assassinated in Colombo.

Currently PLOTE is functioning under the leadership of Dharmalingam Siddharthan and is a pro-government minor political party that is reported to cooperate with the Sri Lankan military against LTTE sympathizers. The group reportedly has around 1500 permanent cadres in the North and the East.

**EPRLF: Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front** is a Sri Lankan political party and a former militant separatist group.



The EPRLF was formed in 1980 by K Pathmanaba, Douglas Devananda, Suresh Premachandren and Varatharaja Perumal as a breakaway faction of the EROS. In 1986, EPRLF formed its military wing, People's Liberation Army, headed by Douglas Devananda. In early 1986, a dispute amongst the EPRLF leadership led to it splitting into two factions; EPRLF (Ranjan) and EPRLF (Douglas).

In late 1986, the Tigers attacked the EPRLF, inflicting heavy losses on them. Many of its cadres were killed or taken prisoner and its camps and weapons were seized by the Tigers.

The EPRLF's first foray into politics came in the flawed 1988 provincial council elections. With the assistance of the IPKF, the EPRLF secured 41 out of 71 seats of the North Eastern Provincial Council.

**TELA: Tamil Eelam Liberation Army** was a Sri Lankan Tamil rebel group. TELA was originally the military wing of the TELO, but split away from TELO in 1982.

TELA was founded by Thangathurai at a meeting in a temple in Thondamanaru in September 1977, along with TELO. Thangathurai had modelled this setup based on the Provisional IRA - Sinn Fein. In its early phase, TELA gained a notable presence in the Jaffna area. It was, alongside the LTTE, the largest Tamil militant group in the area.

In 1982, TELA broke loose from TELO and began functioning as a separate political faction. After the split, TELA was led by Kulasegaram Devasegaram. Devasegaram was assassinated in August 1983, soon after the split. After the killing of the TELA leader, splits and internal feuds appeared within the organization. Followers of the two groups began killing each other.

**EROS: Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students** was formed in London in 1975 by Eliyathamby Ratnasabapathy, V Balakumaran, Nesadurai Thirunesan and Balandarajah. It started as a think-tank, strongly influenced by Marxism, to analyze

Tamil issues. Much of its early membership was drawn from the eastern districts of Batticaloa and Ampara, and also the Jaffna peninsula. EROS was the first political group which recruited Sri Lankan Muslims. They drew up a four phase program to co-opt the Tamil-speaking Muslims of the Eastern province into the Eelam struggle, by working closely with them.

In 1976, the EROS established links with the Abu Jihad of the Palestine Liberation Organization and began planning the setting up of camps to train Sri Lankan Tamils in military and guerrilla warfare. EROS even opened up their training camp for the LTTE where Velupillai Prabhakaran had his initial training. Despite being the most ideological of all the Tamil groups, and its strong revolutionary nationalism, the EROS never became as militarily active as later groups such as LTTE or TELO, largely because its leadership continued to be based in London.

EROS contested the 1989 parliamentary election as an independent group in four electoral districts in the north-east of Sri Lanka. EROS won 229,877 votes (4.11%), securing 13 of the 225 seats in Parliament.

During the IPKF period, EROS was one of the few groups to support the LTTE and was in fact, their main political advisory body as the EROS and LTTE worked in alliance with one another. In the late 1980s, differences arose amongst the EROS leadership over the question of whether or not they should militarily support the LTTE. In 1990, the group was effectively disbanded. One of its two top leaders, V Balakumaran, together with a large portion of members, said it was a betrayal of the Tamil cause not to take up arms.

**LTTE: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam**, founded in May 1976 by Velupillai Prabhakaran, waged a secessionist campaign to create an independent state in the North and East of Sri Lanka. This campaign evolved into the Sri Lankan Civil War, which ran from 1983 until 2009, when the LTTE was decisively defeated by the Sri Lankan military under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

At the height of its power, the LTTE possessed a well-developed militia and carried out many high-profile attacks, including the assassinations of several high-ranking Sri Lankan and Indian politicians, including the former Prime minister of India Rajiv Gandhi and President of Sri Lanka Ranasinghe Premadasa.

The LTTE was founded in 1970s with 40 Tamil Youth, and started several hit-and-run operations against progovernment Tamil politicians, Sri Lanka Police and civil administration during the early 1970s. These attacks included throwing bombs at the residence and the car of SLFP Jaffna Mayor, Alfred Duraiyappah.

To establish itself as the only leader and the sole representative of Tamil people, the LTTE assassinated most of the Tamil leaders, leaders of Tamil militant groups, intellectuals who entered mainstream politics and thereafter, became the strongest and the only Tamil militant group after 1987 (after the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord).

The LTTE is currently proscribed as a terrorist organization in 32 countries, including India, but has the support of some Tamils in Tamil Nadu, India.



**LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran**

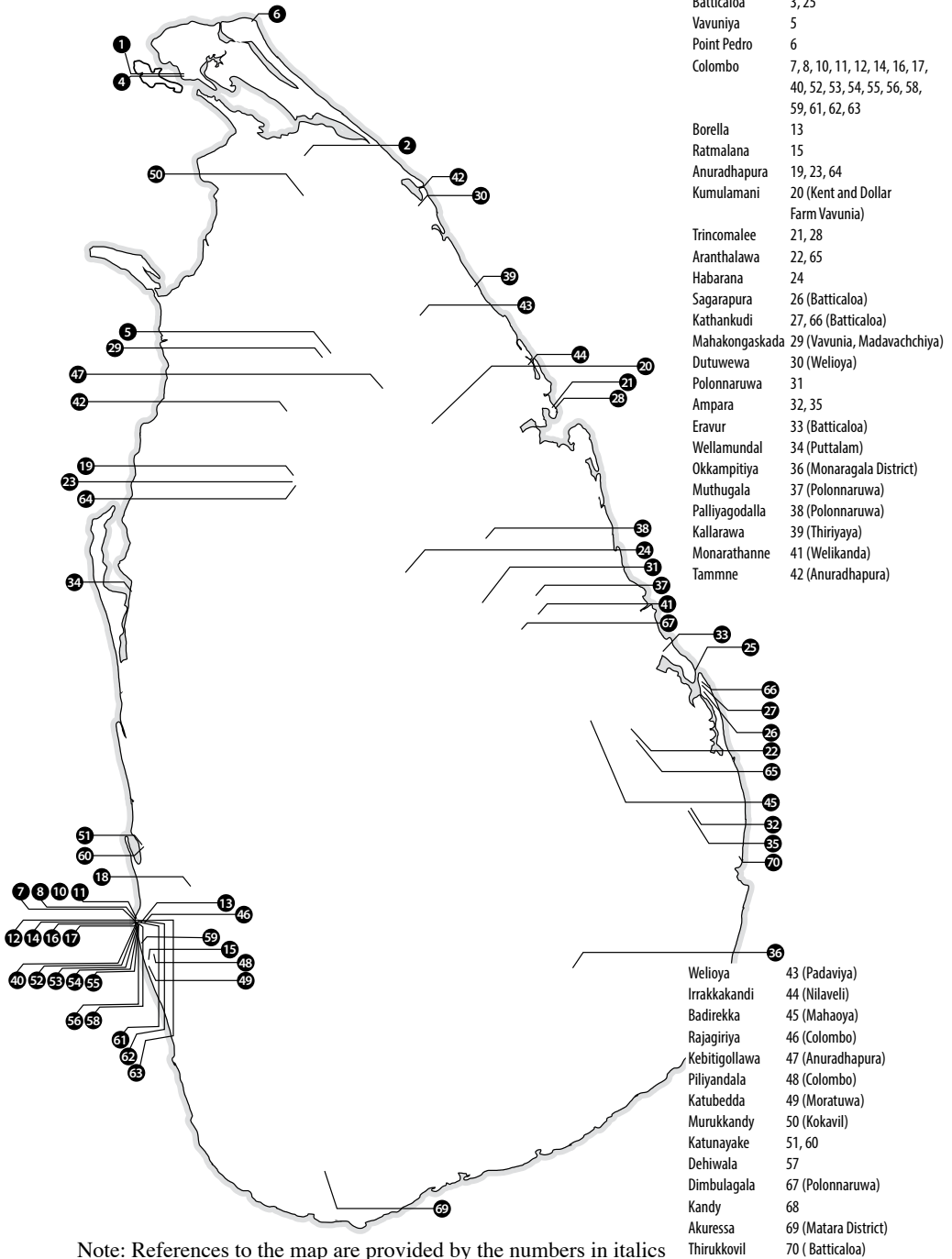
## 5.2 Brutal attacks by the LTTE



**A child soldier**

The separatist militants formed as small groups initially in 1970's, became stronger rapidly after 1983 riots. Thereafter, they managed to get international support to obtain military training and weapons. These militant groups started attacking political leaders, civilians and economically sensitive places in the country. Some of their atrocities are discussed in this section.

# Brutal attacks by the LTTE



Note: References to the map are provided by the numbers in *italics*

## 5.2.1 Political leaders assassinated by the LTTE



**Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka was assassinated on 1st May 1993 by the LTTE.**

Courtesy of ANCL library.

No	Date & Place	Description	No of killed and wounde
1 1	27/07/1975 Jaffna	Mr. Alfred Duraiappa – MP and Mayor of Jaffna – Shot dead. Mr. Duraiappah was a lawyer by profession and he entered politics in 1952 and became mayor of Jaffna in 1958.	2 killed
2 2	02/01/1980 Kilinochchi	Mr. Subaramaniam – UNP organizer for Kilinochchi – Shot dead.	1 killed
3 3	24/05/1981 Batticaloa	Dr. Thiyagaraja – UNP candidate for District Development Council elections 1981 – Shot dead.	1 killed

4 4	15/11/198	Mr. Vallipuram Thambipillai – UNP organizer for Punnalaikadduvan – Shot dead.	1 killed
5 5	19/01/1983	Vavuniya Mr. K T Pullendran – Ex MP/ UNP organizer for Vavuniya – Shot dead.	1 killed
6 6	29/04/1983	Mr. K V Rathnasingham – UNP candidate for UC elections, Point Pedro – Shot dead.	1 killed
7 7	13/07/1989	Mr. A Amirthalingam - a leading Tamil politician, Member of Parliament, and a former leader of opposition. He was gunned down by the Tigers at his residence. He was born in 1927, educated in Meihandan Tamil School and studied at Ceylon University College. After graduation he joined the legal profession and became an advocate. Amirthalingam joined the Federal Party in 1949 and became an MP in 1956. A meeting was arranged between the Tigers and TULF leader at his residence at Bullers Road, Colombo. During the meeting he was shot dead by Visu (Raisiah Aravindarajah) an LTTE leader.	4 killed
8 8	02/03/1991 Colombo	A bomb exploded on Havelock Road, instantly killing the Minister of Plantation Industries and State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne and 18 others. The bomb was planted in a van parked along the route. The Police believed that the weight of the bomb was at least 60 kg	18 killed

9 9	21/05/1991 India	Former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by the LTTE. Rajiv Gandhi's last public meeting was at Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu on 21 May 1991. Ms. Thenmozhi Rajaratnam (LTTE suicide cadre) approached Rajiv Gandhi in public and greeted him. She then bent down to touch his feet and detonated a belt laden with 700 grams of RDX explosives tucked under her dress. The explosion killed Rajiv Gandhi, his assassin and at least 25 other people. The Supreme Court judgment confirmed that the killing had been carried out on the LTTE leader Prabhakaran's orders due to his personal animosity towards Gandhi for sending the Indian Peace Keeping Force to Sri Lanka. Gandhi was the architect of the Indo-Lanka Accord, designed among other things to rein in the LTTE.	26 killed
10 10	23/04/1993	DUNF leader, former Minister of National Defence Lalith Athulathmudali was assassinated by an unidentified gunman as he addressed an election meeting at Kirulapone. Athulathmudali, 56, rose to national prominence with the UNP election victory in 1977. The Oxford and Harvard educated lawyer was considered to be one of the brightest young men of his generation.	01 killed



11 11	01/05/1993 Armour Street – Colombo	May Day bomb explosion at Armour street killed Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka and 23 others and wounded another 38. Ranasinghe Premadasa was the 3rd President of Sri Lanka from 2nd January 1989 to 1st May 1993. Before that, he served as the Prime Minister in the government headed by J R Jayewardene from 6th February 1978 to 1st January 1989. Premadasa's entry into politics was made from the Labour Party and in the 1950's he joined the UNP.	24 killed 38 wounded
12 12	24/10/1994 Thotalanga Junction Colombo	Gamini Dissanayake, opposition leader and UNP candidate for the Presidential election, Party General Secretary Dr. Gamini Wijesekara and two former cabinet ministers were among the 53 killed in a suicide bomb attack on an election rally in Colombo. W Mallimarachchi and G M Premachandra were the former members of the UNP cabinet who died.	54 killed 72 wounded
13 13	29/07/1999 Borella Colombo	TULF National List MP Dr. Neelan Thiruchelvam was killed by a suspected LTTE suicide bomber near his Rosmead Place residence. Seven others were injured including police security officers. Dr. Thiruchelvam, a lawyer by profession, was a widely respected Tamil Politician. He was the son of M Thiruchelvam, QC who was the Minister of Local Government in a former UNP government.	1 killed 7 wounded

14 14	18/12/1999 Town hall - Colombo	President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga had a miraculous escape when a suspected LTTE suicide bomber set off a massive bomb killing 23 persons including her personal driver and injuring over 100 others including Ministers Professor G L Pieris, Alavi Mowlana and Kingsley Wickramaratne at the final People's Alliance election rally at Town Hall.	23 killed 106 wounded
15 15	07/06/2000 Ratmalana Colombo	Industrial Development Minister C V Goonaratne was assassinated by a male LTTE suicide bomber while his wife Shyama was seriously injured at Katubedda on Galle Road when he was leading a War Heroes' Day March. Deputy Mayor Dehiwala Mount Lavinia Anura de Silva, four officers of the Ministerial Security Division and a number of officials were also killed in the blast.	4 killed 60 wounded

16 16	12/08/2005 Colombo	<p>Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadiragamar, a man who stood for peace, unity and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka was assassinated by a sniper bullet fired by an unidentified gunman in Colombo. He was a statesman highly respected by foreign leaders and governments. One of the finest contemporary orators of the English language, he was educated at Trinity College where he won the Ryde Gold Medal for the Best All Round Student. He passed out from the University of Ceylon in 1953 and was placed first in the Advocates' Intermediate Examination the same year.</p> <p>He was admitted to the Bar in 1955 winning First Class at the Advocate Final Examination of the Ceylon Law College. He was admitted to the UK Bar as a Barrister at Law, Inner Temple. He was awarded a</p> <p>B. Lit. by the University of Oxford where he served as the President of the Oxford Union.</p>	1 killed
17 17	01/01/2008 Kotahena - Colombo	<p>A former Minister in the UNP Government, T Maheswaran was shot dead by unknown gunmen at the Sivam Kovil. One of his bodyguards too died in the shooting while 10 others including four women and a child were injured. Maheshwaran was born in 1966 and first entered Parliament by contesting the Jaffna District from the UNP at the 2000 General Election. He held the position of Minister of Hindu Affairs. In 2004, he was re-elected from the Colombo District.</p>	2 killed 10 wounded

18 18	06/04/2008 Weliweriya, Gampaha	Highways and Road Development Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle and 13 others were killed in a LTTE suicide bomb blast in Weliweriya, Gampaha. The blast occurred as soon as the Minister, the Chief Guest raised the flag to start the marathon in the presence of over 500 people. Sri Lanka's National Athletic Coach Lakshman De Alwis and ace marathon runner K A Karunaratne who represented Sri Lanka at Barcelona Olympics in 1992, were among the dead along with two other participants in the race.	13 killed 72 wounded
19 19	06/10/2008 Anuradha- pura	Twenty eight persons including North Central Provincial Opposition Leader Major General (Rtd) Janaka Perera, his wife who was also a former military officer and several other prominent UNP members in Anuradhapura District were killed as an LTTE suicide cadre blew himself up at a UNP function.	28 killed 84 wounded

5.2.2 Civilians and villages attacked by the LTTE



LTTE exploded a CTB bus at Kabitigollawa, 64 killed, 87 wounded.

Courtesy of ANCL library

No	Date & Place	Description	No of killed and wounde
1 20	29/11/1984 Vavuniya	The Kent and Dollar Farm massacres were one of the earliest massacres of Sinhalese civilians carried out by the LTTE during the Sri Lankan Civil War. They were two tiny farming villages in the district of Vavuniya. The LTTE had claimed that the North and East of Sri Lanka was the exclusive homeland of Tamils and began their campaign of ethnic cleansing in the 1980s. The Sinhalese of the Northern Province and Eastern Province of Sri Lanka suffered severe losses of life and property as a result of numerous massacres carried out by the LTTE for the purpose of ethnically cleansing the North and East of Sri Lanka.	Dollar Farm 33 killed, Kent Farm 29 killed

2 21	25/05/1986 Trincomalee	LTTE attacked Mahadivulwewa, a Sinhala village using automatic weapons and subsequently set fire to houses.	20 killed
3 22	07/02/1987 Ampara	Aranthalawa- Sinhala fishing village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords, knives, clubs, etc.	27 killed
4 23	25/03/1987 Anuradhapura	The LTTE used automatic weapons and swords and massacred at least 25 civilians in Serunewa, a Sinhala village.	25 killed
5 24	17/04/1987 Habarana	Over 100 passengers belonging to all communities were killed when LTTE attacked three buses travelling along the HabaranaTrincomalee road. The busses were stopped near Kitulotuwa and passengers were shot dead in cold blood.	96 killed 44 wounded
6 25	06/10/1987 Batticaloa	Talawai, a Sinhala fishing village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords, knives, clubs, etc.	25 killed
7 26	06/10/1987 Trincomalee	Sagarapura, a Sinhala fishing village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords, knives, clubs, etc. and subsequently 57 houses were set on fire.	27 killed
8 27	31/12/1987 Batticaloa	Kathankudi, a Muslim village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords, and knives.	30 killed
9 28	05/03/1988 Trincomalee	Sittaru Kantalai was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	24 killed
10 29	10/10/1988 Vavuniya	Mahakongaskanda, Madavach-chiya was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	44 killed
11 30	11/02/1989 Mullaithivu	Dutuwewa - Welioya, a Sinhala village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	37 killed 5 wounded

12 31	27/02/1989 Polonnaruwa	Borawewa, a Sinhala village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	38 killed 3 wounded
14 33	11/08/1990 Batticaloa	LTTE terrorists, in three groups of around 40 each, raided the Eravur Muslim township and hacked and shot to death at least 173 Muslims. Among the killed were 115 men, 27 women and 31 children.	173 killed 20 wounded
15 34	19/09/1990 Puttalam	Tigers stormed the fishing village Wellamundal, northwest of Puttalm and massacred nearly 23 villagers including women and children. According to security sources around 40 Tigers had taken part in this brutal massacre.	23 killed 2 wounded
16 35	23/01/1991 Ampara	Twenty nine civilians were brutally shot and hacked to death by LTTE terrorists at Bogamuyaya in the Mahaoya police area of Ampara district. Bogamuyaya is an isolated village on the Mahaoya – Polonnaruwa Road. These villagers had only recently resettled in their village, having left it some time ago following previous attacks on isolated villages.	29 killed 5 wounded
17 36	20/04/1991 Ampara	Niyandella, Okkampitita village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	22 killed
18 37	29/04/1992 Polonnaruwa	Karapola, Muthugala & Alinchipothna villages were attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	130 killed 71 wounded
19 38	20/04/1991 Ampara	Palliyagodella and Ahamedpura. LTTE attacked the two villages located at Polonnaruwa District using automatic weapons, swords and knives etc.	146 killed 83 wounded

20 39	25/05/1995 Trincomalee	The Kallarawa massacre was an incident in which LTTE cadres killed 42 Sinhalese men, women and children. All the remaining civilian survivors fled the village after this incident leading to its depopulation. However, survivors from the Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim communities have returned to Kallarawa under the protection of the Sri Lanka Army.	42 killed 15 wounded
21 40	07/08/1995 Colombo	A suicide cadre pushing a king coconut cart fixed with a bomb exploded it at the gate of the office of the Western Province Chief Minister located at Independence Square.	23 killed 40 wounded
22 41	21/10/1995 Polonnaruwa	Monarathanna village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	36 killed 12 wounded
23 42	26/10/1995 Anuradhapura	Tammanna Halmillewa village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	26 killed 27 wounded
24 43	26/10/1995 Mullaithivu	Alapathwewa-Welioya village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	26 killed
25 44	02/07/1997 Trincomalee	Erakkandy, a Muslim village was attacked using automatic weapons, swords and knives.	34 killed
26 47	18/09/1999 Ampara	Galapitigala, Badirekka and Borapola Sinhala villages located in the Ampara District were attacked. According to reports, 50 men, women and children were hacked to death in the middle of the night. LTTE female cadres had also taken part in this killing.	50 killed 5 wounded



27 48	10/03/2000 Colombo	The LTTE killed a large group of people at Rajagiriya when their mission of assassinating cabinet ministers and top defence officials returning from the Parliament failed.	15 killed 76 wounded
28 47	15/06/2006 Anuradhapura	LTTE had exploded two claymore mines targeting a CTB bus transporting approximately 160 passengers at Kebithigollawa.	64 killed 87 wounded
29 48	25/04/2008 Colombo	At Piliyandala a CTB bus was exploded using a remote controlled device.	27 killed 67 wounded
30 49	06/06/2008 Colombo	Around 23 civilians including eight women were killed and over 70 others were injured when LTTE triggered off a claymore mine targeting a packed passenger bus at Katubadda, Moratuwa.	23 killed 70 wounded

### 5.2.3 Economic targets attacked by the LTTE



**LTTE attack on the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.**

Courtesy of ANCL library

No	Date & Place	Description	No of killed and wounde
1 50	19/01/1985 Murugandi	Land mine explosion targeting “Yal Devi” train. Twenty three soldiers and 11 civilians were killed in the attack on the “Yal Devi” between Murugandi and Mankulam. There were 13 carriages in the train and 11 were hit by the explosion.	34 killed
2 51	03/05/1986	Bomb exploded in a TRISTAR aircraft at Bandaranaike Katunayake International Airport, killing foreign and local passengers. The aircraft was purchased in 1982, from All Nippon Airlines at a cost of US\$ 17 million. According to the official sources the explosion appeared to be the work of EROS.	16 killed

3 52	03/05/1986	Bomb exploded in a TRISTAR aircraft at Bandaranaike Katunayake International Airport, killing foreign and local passengers. The aircraft was purchased in 1982, from All Nippon Airlines at a cost of US\$ 17 million. According to the official sources the explosion appeared to be the work of EROS.	16 killed
4 53	07/05/1986 CTO Colombo	A terrorist bomb at Central Telecommunication Complex killed 11 people and injured 114. The rescue workers fought their way through a mass of twisted metal, wooden beams and dislodged plaster, all that remained of the Telecommunications Dept's payment section in the old style, wooden floored colonial building, to get at the injured.	11 killed 114 wounded
5 54	21/04/1987 Central Bus Stand, Pettah	A powerful bomb exploded in the heart of Pettah at 5 pm killing at least 100 persons. The explosion occurred when the area was crowded with office workers returning to their homes. The worst hit were the private coaches parked opposite the CBS building. According to the official sources the bomb appeared to be the work of EROS. Police believed the weight of the bomb to be at least 35 kg.	106 killed 295 wounded
6 55	20/10/1995 Kolonnawa Orugoda- watte	A terrorist strike at the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation's (CPC) Kolonnawa tank farm and the Orugodawatte crude oil depot is one of the biggest ever blazes seen in Colombo with subsequent shooting leaving 21 persons dead.	21 killed

7 56	11/11/1995 Slave Island Colombo	A suicide bomber who had been in the vicinity of Army Head Quarters (AHQ) blew himself close to the Slave Island railway station.	11 killed 52 wounded
8 57	31/01/1996 Central Bank of Sri Lanka Colombo	The Central Bank bombing was one of the deadliest terrorist attacks carried out by the LTTE. A truck (42-6452) containing about 440 pounds of explosives crashed through the main gate of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the suicide bomber in the lorry detonated the massive bomb, which destroyed the bank and damaged eight other buildings nearby. The lorry was followed by a three-wheeler, carrying two LTTE cadres armed with automatic rifles and RPG launchers. The blast killed at least 91 people and injured 1,400 others.	91 killed 1400 wounded
9 58	24/07/1996 Railway station - Dehiwala	Two powerful bombs ripped through the Aluthgama bound evening train at the Dehiwala railway station. According to police sources the carnage occurred when two parcel bombs placed in two separate compartments exploded simultaneously. The train was packed to capacity with the office workers leaving for their homes.	57 killed 356 wounded
10 59	15/10/1997 World Trade Centre – Colombo Fort	The Colombo World Trade Centre bombing was another attack carried out by the LTTE. The LTTE drove a container truck laden with explosives into the car park of the Galadari Hotel; they then detonated it by firing RPGs at it. The car park is next to the rear of the Colombo World Trade Centre, twin 39 storey towers that houses the Colombo Stock Exchange, Board of Investment and many other establishments.	11 killed 105 wounded

11 60	05/03/1998 Maradana	<p>A Nissan mini bus without passengers and laden with explosives, driven by an LTTE suicide cadre had knocked into a vehicle belonging to City Motors. Thereafter, Sub Inspector Perera chased the mini bus and ordered the driver to turn the vehicle to the Maradana Police Station.</p> <p>Instead, the driver turned the bus into the center lane and his path was blocked by a lorry belonging to the Health Department. The suicide bomber had exploded the mini bus damaging 34 vehicles on both sides and also causing extensive damage to the shops on both sides of the road. Police sources believed that the weight of the bomb to be at least 40 kg.</p>	36 killed 270 wounded
11 60	24/07/2001 Katunayake	<p>The group of about 20 LTTE terrorists who launched a predawn attack on the Katunayake Air Force Base had first arrived at Raja Fernando playground, Kurana by a bus. They had been wearing camouflage uniforms and had unloaded three sacks from the bus and they had proceeded towards the Kurana railway track. These LTTE suicide cadres had then attacked the Sri Lanka Air Force Base and the Bandaranaike International Airport. An aircraft and an oil tank had been set ablaze.</p>	

12 61	03/02/2008 Fort Railway station - Colombo	<p>The Fort Railway station attack was a suicide bombing of a commuter train while it was stopped at the station. An LTTE female suicide cadre blew herself at the Colombo Fort railway station.</p> <p>The bombing killed 12 and injured more than 100. Killed in the attack were eight students of the baseball team of D S Senanayake College and their coach.</p>	12 killed 100 wounded
13 62	28/10/2008 Grandpass	An LTTE light aircraft dropped two bombs into the premises of Kelanitissa power house and escaped. The Kelanitissa power station is a power generation complex consisting of two separate facilities. The entire power facility is capable of generating 500 MW of power. The two bombs dropped in the aerial attack on the power station caused a fire and damaged one of the two units.	
14 63	09/02/2009 Colombo	An LTTE plane caused extensive damage to The Department of Inland Revenue Head Office building.	

## 5.2.4 Religious places attacked by the LTTE



**LTTE attack on the Temple of Tooth.**  
Courtesy of ANCL library

No	Date & Place	Description	No of killed and wounded
1 64	14/05/1985 Anuradhapura	The Anuradhapura massacre is an incident in which LTTE cadres massacred 146 Sinhalese men, women and children in Anuradhapura. LTTE hijacked a bus and entered Anuradhapura. As the LTTE cadres entered the main bus station, they opened fire indiscriminately with automatic weapons killing and wounding many civilians who were waiting for buses. LTTE cadres then drove to the Sri Maha Bodhi shrine and gunned down monks and civilians as they were praying inside the shrine. This incident was designed to provoke massive retaliation by the Sinhalese majority against the Tamils in order to strengthen the LTTE's position among the Tamil people. On their way back, the LTTE strike force entered the national park of Wilpattu and killed 18 Sinhalese in the forest reserve.	146 killed 85 wounded
2 65	02/06/1987 Aranthala-wa	Terrorists massacred 35 people including 31 Buddhist monks travelling from the Ampara district to an Upasampada ceremony in Kandy.	35 killed 14 wounded
3 66	06/08/1990 Kathan-kudy	LTTE massacred 140 Muslims worshipping in a mosque at Kathankudy. The LTTE claimed that they had given the Muslims an ultimatum to leave Kathankudy or face the consequences.	140 killed 70 wounded



4 67	02/05/1995 Dimbulagala	The highly respected Dimbulagala monk, Venerable Kithalgama Sri Seelalankara Thera and his driver were killed.	02 killed
5 68	25/01/1998 Kandy	Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic was attacked. It is the most revered place of worship in the island for Buddhists, who comprise 70% of the population. Many people were killed when an LTTE suicide cadre exploded two bombs in the vicinity of Dalada Maligawa and the damage to the historical building was extensive.	09 killed 15 wounded
6 69	11/03/2009 Godapitiya - Akuressa	15 people were killed and another 46 including Telecommunications Minister M Wijesekara were injured in a suicide attack which targeted the National Milad-un-Nabi festival at the Jumma Mosque in Godapitiya. Ministers A H M Fowzie, M Y Abeywardena, Ameer Ali, P Bandaranayake and Chandrasiri Gajadeera escaped unhurt.	15 killed 46 wounded

### 5.2.5 1990 massacre of Sri Lanka Police officers by the LTTE

No	Date & Place	Description	No of killed and wounde
170	5.2.5 1990 Thirukkivil	<p>LTTE had killed over 600 unarmed Sri Lanka Police officers in the Eastern Province, Sri Lanka. Some accounts estimated that the number killed as high as 774.</p> <p>On June 11, 1990 at about 6.00 a.m. the LTTE surrounded the Batticaloa police station and abducted three policemen. About an hour later, around 250 armed LTTE cadres occupied the Police. Then the Sinhala police officers along with their families were sent to the airport. Tamil police officers were taken to the St Mary's Church, with their families. The acting officer-in-charge and four other policemen were detained. The LTTE also removed Rs. 45 million in cash, gold jewellery, 109 T56 rifles, 77 T84S rifles, 28 light machine guns, 29 self-loading rifles, 65 sub machine guns, 78 .303 rifles and 78 SAR 80 guns from the police station.</p> <p>The LTTE ordered all police stations in Eastern Province to be vacated by 2.30 p.m. or face the consequences. It was believed that the Police officers were instructed by the Police Headquarters, Colombo to lay down their arms and surrender to the LTTE. Police officers complied after being promised safe conduct and subsequent release.</p>	774 killed

	<p>Then the Sinhalese officers were sent to the Army or Air Force camps while Tamil officers were accommodated at schools. Meanwhile, the LTTE abducted 899 police officers. About 125 were able to escape.</p> <p>The policemen were taken to Vinayagapuram and Trincomalee Jungles. Once they had arrived, the LTTE cadres lined up the officers, tied their hands behind their back and shot them dead. In all, 600-774 police officers were killed.</p>	
--	---	--

## 5.3 Abbreviations

NM	: Nautical Miles
OIC	: Officer in Charge
PLOTE	: People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam
PWV	: Parama Weera Vibhushanaya
QRT	: Quick Reaction Team
RAW	: Research and Analysis Wing (Indian Secret Service)
RDX	: Researched and Developed Explosives (plastic explosives)
RPG	: Rocket Propelled Grenade
SBS	: Special Boat Squadron
SF	: Special Forces
SLFP	: Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLN	: Sri Lanka Navy
SLNS	: Sri Lanka Navy Ship
SMEs	: Small and Medium-scale Enterprises
TELA	: Tamil Eelam Liberation Army
TELO	: Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization
TULF	: Tamil United Liberation Front
UNP	: United National Party
USA	: United State of America
AFV	: Armoured Fighting Vehicle
ANCL	: Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd (Lake House)
CFA	: Cease-Fire Agreement
EPRLF	: Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front
EROS	: Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students
EU	: European Union
FAC	: Fast Attack Craft

---

FGB	: Fast Gun Boat
GPMG	: General Purpose Machine Gun
IPKF	: Indian Peace Keeping Force
ISGA	: Interim Self-Governing Authority
JVP	: Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
LMG	: Light Machine Gun
LTTE	: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
LRRP	: Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol
MBRL	: Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher
MOD	: Ministry of Defence
MPMG	: Multi-Purpose Machine Gun
MRL	: Multiple Rocket Launcher
MV	: Merchant Vessel
NFZ	: No-Fire Zone
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization

Commissioned Officers - Sri Lanka Army



Field Marshal



General



Lieutenant General



Major General



Brigadier



Colonel



Lieutenant Colonel



Major



Captain



Lieutenant



Second Lieutenant

Warrant Officers, Non Commissioned and Other Ranks



Warrant Officer Class 1



Warrant Officer Class 2



Staff Sergeant



Sergeant



Corporal or Bombardier














Lance Corporal








Private

Commissioned Officers - Sri Lanka Navy

						
Admiral of the fleet	Admiral	Vice admiral	Rear admiral	Commodore	Captain	Commander
						
Lieutenant commander	Lieutenant	Sub-lieutenant	Acting Sub-lieutenant			

Warrant Officers, Non Commissioned and Other Ranks

						
Master chief petty officer	Fleet chief petty officer	Chief Petty Officer	Petty Officer	Leading Seaman	Able Seaman	Seaman recruit

Commissioned Officers - Sri Lanka Air Force



Marshal  
of the AF



Air Chief  
Marshal



Air Marshal



Air  
Vice Marshal



Air  
Commodore



Group  
Captain



Wing  
Commander



Squadron  
Leader



Flight  
Lieutenant



Flying  
Officer



Pilot Officer

Warrant Officers, Non Commissioned and Other Ranks



Master  
Warrant Officer



Warrant Officer



Flight Sergeant



Sergeant



Corporal



Leading  
Aircraftman



## 5.4 References

Blacker, D., “the Blacklight Arrow”, David Blacker’s Blog

Chandrapuruma, C. A., (2012), “Gota’s War- The Crushing of Tamil Tiger Terrorism in Sri Lanka”, Ranjan Wijeratne Foundation.

Centre for Reconciliation and Co-existence. (2014), “19752014”, Lakshman Kadiragamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies.

De Silva, J., (2009), “Chronology of LTTE Terror”, The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd.

Dixit, J.N., (1998), “Assignment Colombo”, Vijitha Yapa Bookshop

Gunaratna, R, (1990), "Sri Lanka - A Lost Revolution ?", Institute of Fundamental Studies - Sri Lanka

Hoole, R., Somasundaram, D., Srikanthan, K., and Thirinagama,

R, (1988). “The Broken Palmyra”. Harvy Mud University, USA

Ivan, V., “Paradise in tears”, Sahajeewana Centre for Coexistence

Jayawardene, E., (2004), “The Last Kingdom of Sinhale”, M D Gunasena Company Ltd

Karannagoda, W., (2014), “Adhishtanaya”, H K Mahindalal

Mendis, L.M.H., (2013), “Eelam War 1, IPKF Operations, Eelam War 2, Eelam War 3 and Eelam War 4.

- Munasinghe, S., (2000), "A Soldier's Version",  
Market Information Systems (Pvt) Ltd
- Perera, T. R., (2009), "The last war at Wanni", Pahan  
Prakashana
- Ranasinghe, H., (2011), "Saturata Yatath Novana Ma",  
Special Forces - Sri Lanka Army
- Swami, M. R. N., (1994). "Tigers of Lanka – From  
Boys to Guerillas", Vijitah Yapa Publications, Sri  
Lanka
- Swami, M. R. N., (2004), "Inside an elusive mind-  
Prabakaran", Vijitah Yapa Publications, Sri Lanka
- Strategic Initiatives for the Protection of Sri Lanka,  
(2014), "The LTTE- The most disciplined fighting  
force the world has ever known" , Multilines
- Wilson, E O, "The Social conquest of earth" (2013),  
Liveright Publishing corporation, New York
- Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*Scientific study of the biological basis of human social behavior leaves no doubt that our species homo sapiens evolved by conflicts between tribes. Tribalism is a fundamental human trait. Human history has been the history of tribal conflicts. The Buddha taught the eternal law that "hatred is never appeased by hatred, it is appeased by love". Mindful of this teaching, in this inspired and inspiring publication, Prasad Polwatte celebrates 32 Immortal soldires who demonstrated in the highest possible degree in real life, the noblest human behaviour trait, namely altruism voluntary self-destructive behaviour performed by one to benefit others is called altruism. Of such behaviour Jesus Christ said; "greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends".*

**Carlo Fonseka**

Emeritus Professor  
University of Colombo

*This is not a book. It is a magnificent heartfelt tribute by the author to people who gave their lives for us to see peace. It is a must read for any Sri Lankan, to honour the real heroes and remember them, lest they be forgotten.*

**Capt. Elmo Jayawardena**  
Winner Gratiaen Award and State Literary Award